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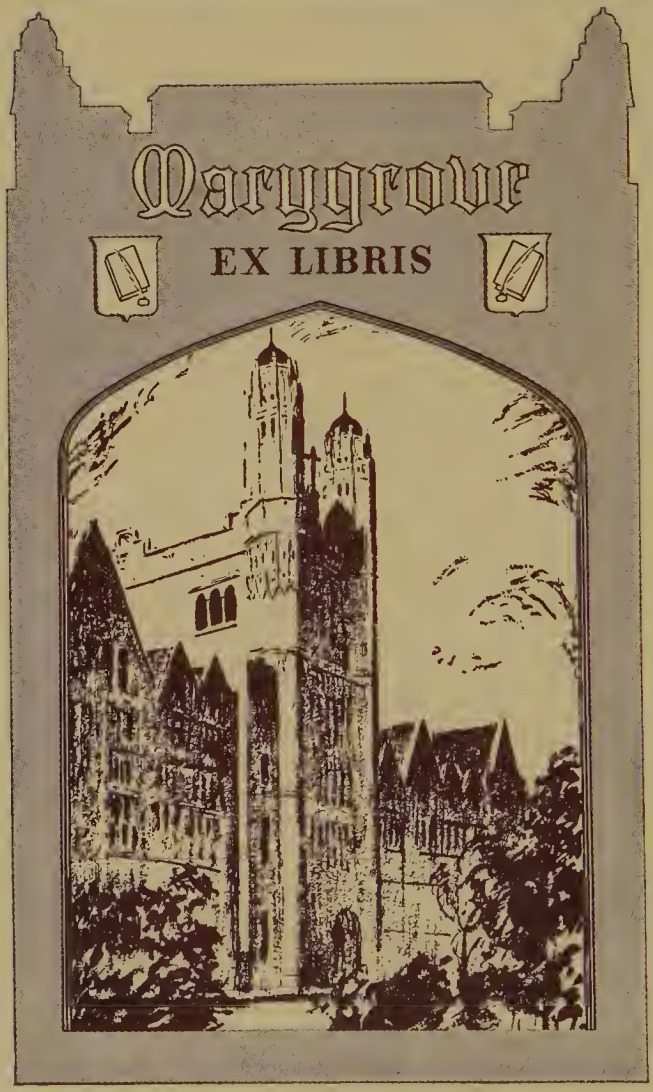
# THE MASS-DRAMA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# THE MASS-DRAMA

AN OUTLINE OF ITS STRUCTURE

*by*

WILLIAM BUSCH
Professor of Church History
in the St. Paul Seminary

*1930*

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*Bishop of St. Cloud*

April 5, 1930

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GLORIAE

Memorial Window in the Church of St. Joseph, Red Wing, Minnesota.—See Appendix Page 88.

# FOREWORD

The progress of the liturgical revival and the increasing quantity of writings on the liturgy enable us to discern more clearly from day to day the epoch-making character of the present movement. Already we begin to look back to former days when we did not understand as we do now. The meaning of the eucharistic sacrifice dawns upon us with a fulness we had not known, and with promise of a spiritual and social renewal which we may envision but cannot estimate. Recent books on the holy sacrifice quite astonish us with the revelations that they bring. The present booklet, made up for the most part of articles which appeared in *Orate Fratres,* is derived from the literature of the liturgical revival, and its purpose is to indicate the main outlines of the structure of the Mass-drama. The Mass is a subject so vast that one may easily lose sight of its structural outline as one's interest is engaged here and there amid a wealth of detail, historical, dogmatic, ascetic and aesthetic. And yet, if the Mass is to be for us what it ought to be, it is very important that we have a clear understanding of it as a whole, in its unity of structure and in its unity of purpose. In these pages brevity has been maintained for the sake of clearness. Readers may supplement this outline by a study of the subjoined list of books. This list is not intended as a complete one. It simply presents a certain amount of select literature which cannot fail to be helpful.

W. B.

The St. Paul Seminary,
Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul,
January 25, 1930.

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# THE MASS-DRAMA

## An Outline of Its Structure


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# THE PRINCIPAL PARTS OF THE MASS

IN our catechism classes children are taught to say that "the principal parts of the Mass are the Offertory, Consecration, and Communion." This statement is misleading if it is taken, as is likely, to indicate the main divisions of the Mass. It is apt to suggest that what precedes the Offertory is not important. We know the unfortunate casuistry of those who aim to arrive in time for the Offertory and to just escape missing Mass.

An adequate division of the Mass must take in all its parts. Hence, we should teach the children first of all that the Mass has two main parts, the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful.[1] The Mass of the Catechumens extends from the beginning to and including the Creed. This is an introductory service; it is not the sacrifice; but it is important and should not be missed. The Mass of the Faithful extends from the Offertory to the end. This is the actual sacrifice.

Then, proceeding to subdivide, we say that the Mass of the Catechumens has two parts, the first made up of prayer and the second of instruction. And when we subdivide the Mass of the Faithful, shall we say that it has three parts, Offertory, Consecration, and Communion? We may well pause before doing so.

[1] These terms originated in the primitive Church. Catechumens were those under instruction before Baptism. They were allowed to assist at the first part of the service. Only the faithful, i. e., those who were baptized, could take part in the actual sacrifice.

Do these words mean three important moments in the Mass, or do they mean divisional parts? We are concerned here with divisional parts, for we are no longer satisfied with that method of assisting at Mass which pays only occasional attention to what goes on at the altar. We wish to participate in the Mass, to know all its parts and not only its principal moments.

And next, consider, is not the Consecration also offertory? The offering of the sacrifice begins with the unveiling of the chalice and paten and continues to the end of the Canon, that is, to the *Amen* before the Pater Noster. Why does non-liturgical devotion insist on an intense act of faith in the Real Presence immediately after the Consecration, as if we were skeptical, as if we did not know from the very beginning that our Lord is to come? Modern private devotion, influenced by controversy with unbelief, is inclined to stress the fact of the Real Presence, and to lose sight to a considerable extent of the primary reason of our Lord's presence. Liturgical devotion, the official devotion of the Church, teaches us that He comes not primarily to be adored,[1] but to offer Himself in union with us and to be our spiritual food. He comes "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a redemption for many."[2] Hence in the Mass the offering does not reach its height until after the Consecration. Read in the Missal the prayer immediately following the Consecration, and consider that its verb is "offerimus"—we

[1] On the means aspect and the end aspect of the Eucharist see Kramp-Busch, *Eucharistia*, pp. 112, 116.

[2] Matt. 20, 28.

offer. Read the Canon from beginning to end, and consider the many words expressing the motive of oblation.[1]

It is true that we should distinguish between that part of the Mass of the Faithful which precedes the Preface and that from the Preface to the Pater Noster. But we must not fail to make it plain that the offering of the sacrifice continues throughout the Canon. We must find some term to cover all that part of the Mass which "offers." And then we may subdivide it by some such words as Offertory and Consecration.

Thus we may say: The Mass of the Faithful is divided into two parts, the sacrifice-oblation and the sacrifice-banquet. The sacrifice-oblation may be subdivided into Offertory and Consecration, while the sacrifice-banquet is the Communion.

THE MASS
- I. Mass of the Catechumens:
  - 1. Prayer
  - 2. Instruction
- II. Mass of the Faithful:
  - 1. Sacrifice-oblation
    - Offertory
    - Consecration
  - 2. Sacrifice-banquet: Communion

The Mass is an interchange of gifts; we give to God and God gives to us. This double motive is the basis of the entire Mass-structure. It determines the division into two parts of both the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful. In the Mass of the Catechumens we first give to God, in the prayer-part, and then God gives to us, in the instruction-part. Likewise in the Mass of the Faithful, the sacrifice-oblation is our gift to God,

[1] See the text of the Canon, infra, Appendix, III, p. 84.

while the sacrifice-banquet is God's gift to us. In both cases the interchange is effected through our intimate union with Christ who is both God and man, according to the ever-recurring phrase: "per Christum Dominum nostrum: through Christ our Lord."

The Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful are two distinct and yet closely related acts. Each is structurally complete by itself, and yet they resemble and complete each other. The first is a prelude, an introduction, a preparation for the second. The Mass of the Catechumens carries us, on an inferior level, through a series of acts which are repeated on a more sublime plane in the Mass of the Faithful. In both cases these acts are determined by the great double motive which governs the whole Mass, the interchange of gifts, the "admirable commercium," the reciprocity of heaven and earth, the honoring of God and the hallowing of man.

The Mass of the Catechumens has first of all its prayer-part (corresponding to the sacrifice-oblation). This is our gift to God. The assembly is active and the movement flows forward, upward, God-ward in the Kyrie, Gloria, and Collect. In the instruction-part (corresponding to the sacrifice-banquet) the movement is reversed. It flows downward now, from God to man. The assembly is passive (in the sense of receptive), listening to the Epistle, Gospel, and Sermon, to God's response in the inspired word of holy Scripture. Thus in the Mass of the Catechumens earth is attuned to heaven, and the faithful are prepared to take part in the sublime sacrifice.

The Mass of the Faithful has first of all its sacrifice-oblation, in which we give our gift to God. One might

say simply that we offer to God His divine Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, God and man, under the appearances of bread and wine. But the sacrifice-oblation demands a more detailed understanding. The Mass is both Christ's sacrifice and ours.

We offer firstly bread and wine. These are food-stuffs, elements that sustain and nourish life, and hence they are symbols of our life and gifts expressing our inward offering of self. Let us never forget that in the Mass we offer ourselves. The liturgical Mass-prayers, especially the Secrets, tell us plainly that we are to regard the offering of the bread and wine in this way as the offering of ourselves.[1]

Bread and wine are also the elements chosen by our Lord Himself to be symbols of what He is to mankind, and to be the actual means of His sacramental presence and operation in the Eucharist. At the Consecration the bread and wine become the very body and blood of our Lord. The elements which are symbols of ourselves are now our Lord Himself who is the Redeemer of mankind. The offering, which continues after the Consecration, is now the offering of Christ, but of Christ as gathering up in Himself the offering of all who are His, both His eucharistic body and His mystical body. The bread and wine are changed substantially into His eucharistic body and blood. And we who bring the bread and wine as symbols of our own life-offering, are likewise changed into Christ, not substantially indeed but mystically. The Church is the mystical body of Christ. We are united with our Lord in

[1] For example, the Secret for Trinity Sunday: Hallow, we beseech Thee, O Lord our God, by the invocation of Thy holy name, the victim of this sacrifice; and through its means, make of us also an eternal offering to Thee.

the offering of the Mass, not as so many single individuals, but as many made one in Him.

The sacrifice-banquet is God's gift to us. The turning point from oblation to banquet is indicated a little in advance in words which occur toward the end of the Canon-prayer: "that as many of us as, by participation at this altar, shall receive the most sacred body and blood of Thy Son may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace." These words indicate the reversal of the movement which begins with the Pater Noster. We have thus far given ourselves to God; from now on God gives Himself to us. And as it is in Christ that we give ourselves in oblation, so again it is in Christ that God gives Himself to us in communion.

The dominant word throughout the Communion portion of the Mass is the word *peace;* as peace was the Lord's parting wish to His apostles before His passion, and His greeting to them after His resurrection. It is properly the characteristic note of the sacrifice-banquet, as praise is the characteristic note of the sacrifice-oblation. Thus the two great purposes of all the liturgy are fulfilled, the honoring of God and the hallowing of man. Peace to men is the fruit of that good-will which first gives glory to God.

Such then is the structure of the Mass, an outline covering all its parts, indicating its principal motives and movements, suggesting the beauty of the Mass as an act of divine worship and as a work of art, simple enough for the comprehension of a little child. Let us no longer be satisfied with an analysis of the Mass which mentions only three of its important moments. Let us not be satis-

fied to "do what we please" during Mass except when the bell rings. Let us learn the structure of the Mass in a way that will enable us and impel us to participate in it.

Besides class-room instruction, our children must be given the opportunity to actually live the Mass, and therefore to follow it with the priest according to its own structure. Whatever adaptation of the Mass prayers is made for children must be in harmony with the Mass itself. Too long have we been satisfied with some arrangement of prayers and hymns which amount to a separate service.[1]

Our adult laity, all the more, should be urged and enabled to conform to the structure of the Mass. Perhaps some of them come late for Mass because they think it sufficient to arrive in time for the Offertory and because they do not know the meaning of the Mass of the Catechumens. Consider the hymns which are frequently sung during Mass, often quite unrelated to its own thought and sequence, and observe how confusion must result. Our nuptial Masses are interesting examples in this regard. Unrelated prayers, beautiful as they may be in their proper place, are not a substitute for the Mass prayers. How ridiculous it would be to imagine a priest leaving the missal in the sacristy and proceeding to the altar for Mass with a booklet of his own private devotions. The same incongruity does not appear to us in the case of the laity because we fail to consider that the Mass is the united prayer

[1] See *The Child's Daily Missal,* by the publishers of *The St. Andrew Daily Missal.* Also in German the Schott-Bihlmeyer books, *Das Kind bei der heiligen Messe,* and *Zum Altare Gottes will ich treten.* A teacher's manual for the last named is, Häfner, *Katechetische Einführung in das zweite Kinder-Messbüchlein.*

of the Church and that the laity share in a general way in the priesthood of Christ. "We call all priests," says St. Augustine, "because they are members of one Priest." The more reflective among our laity are grieved at the prevalence of what-you-please methods of assisting at Mass. Those who try to use the missal do so for themselves with little public recognition or aid.

We violate the logical, liturgical sequence of the Mass if we displace its parts. This is done when Communion is distributed throughout the Mass or beginning after the Consecration. The separation of Communion from the sacrifice is still more flagrant when Communion is received before the Mass begins. This faulty custom shows a failure to recognize the main elements of the structure of the Mass. For what is it but expecting to receive God's gift to us before we have given ours to Him? The best preparation for the sacrifice-banquet is the sacrifice-oblation. The holy sacrifice should be celebrated by all in the right order which the Church established in her earliest days. What conductor of an orchestra would allow such liberty to be taken with the movements of a symphony? What spiritual director would suggest that one begin a meditation with the colloquy and end with the composition of place?

We say: "It is the Mass that matters." But when one urges that it is important to study the Mass, to recognize its plan and the sequence of its parts, to celebrate it logically and corporately, then we say: "It does not matter." Fortunately the number is growing of those who know that it is indeed the Mass that matters and that it matters much that we "pray the Mass."

## THE MASS OF THE CATECHUMENS

THE main division of our present Mass-service into two parts, the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful, finds its explanation in the history of early Christian worship. Our Mass has these two main parts because it is made up of what were originally two distinct services. The Mass of the Catechumens was a service of prayer and instruction modeled on the Jewish synagogue service. The Mass of the Faithful is the actual eucharistic Sacrifice.

The first Christians, being devout Jews, continued to frequent the temple and synagogues as the Lord had done. They also had their own Christian worship, especially the eucharistic sacrifice which they celebrated in private homes and which is called in the Acts of the Apostles the breaking of bread. "Continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house."[1] Eventually the Church was obliged to part company with Judaism, but Christian worship continued to embody many Jewish features.

The eucharistic Sacrifice (or the Mass of the Faithful) was at first celebrated in a manner suggested by the Last Supper; that is, in the evening and in conjunction with a community meal called the *agape*. Social repasts of this kind with religious significance were also a part of Jewish and pagan custom. But in the course of time

[1] Acts 2, 46.

the eucharistic Sacrifice was separated from the agape. This was no doubt due to the desire for utmost reverence in the celebration of the Eucharist, and to avoid abuses such as those alluded to by St. Paul in his First Epistle to the Corinthians. The agape continued to be observed by itself for some time. But the Eucharist was now joined to another service.

For in the meantime the Church had fashioned a service of prayer and instruction which was simply a Christian counterpart of the Jewish synagogue service. The service of the synagogue was made up of prayer and the chanting of the Psalms, of reading from the Law and the Prophets and sermons in comment on the passages read. The Church took this over quite as it was: for the New Law was the fulfilment of the Old. But the Jewish service was christianized, its scope enlarged, its spirit deepened, and in time new compositions were added, new Christian prayers and hymns and the writings of the New Testament.

This Christian service of prayer and instruction now took the place of the agape as a preparatory service preceding the eucharistic sacrifice. We call it the Mass of the Catechumens because it was open to all who might wish to come, especially the catechumens who were preparing for Christian baptism. They were dismissed at the end of it and only the baptized faithful were allowed to take part in the offering of the Sacrifice, which therefore we call the Mass of the Faithful. These two services are united and blended in the Mass today.

The distinction between these two main parts of the Mass appears most clearly today in the celebration of Pon-

tifical High Mass. For the bishop in the pontifical Mass remains at his cathedra or throne throughout the Mass of the Catechumens, and goes definitely to the altar at the Offertory, that is, at the beginning of the sacrificial service or the Mass of the Faithful.

While the two parts are thus distinct in their origin as well as in their meaning and importance, in the course of liturgical development they have been adapted to each other so that without the confusion of either they form one harmonious whole. The eucharistic Sacrifice requires an introductory service in order that the faithful may be elevated in mind and heart to its high level. And in the sacrifice the introductory service attains to the summit of its aspirations.

When we analyze the structure of the Mass of the Catechumens it is important to observe first of all its main division into a giving part and a receiving part (corresponding to the sacrifice oblation and the sacrifice-banquet in the Mass of the Faithful). All prayer is by its nature interaction between man and God. It is an offering on our part to God and it brings blessing in return. Hence the classic formulas of prayer all show this division into a giving part and a receiving part. The Our Father, the Hail Mary, and the Confiteor are well known examples; the litanies, likewise, with their invocation which offers praise and their response which anticipates blessing.

Thus we have in the Mass of the Catechumens first a giving part made up of the Introit, Kyrie, Gloria, and Collect; an offering of homage to God in the united prayer of the assembly. The second or receiving part is God's response in the inspired words of the Epistle and Gospel

and in the sermon which in ancient times seems to have been invariably an instruction or exhortation based upon the scriptural readings. The Collect may perhaps be regarded as a transition piece between the two parts. It properly belonged to the giving part and its opening clauses render homage to God; yet its final clause is petition and points directly to the receiving part which follows immediately.

The prayers said at the foot of the altar in the Mass today were not there in ancient times. They represent the celebrant's private preparation which originally was in words of his own choice. During the Middle Ages it became customary to use the same or similar prayers for this purpose, and they were definitely worded as at present and prescribed to be said at the foot of the altar by order of Pope Pius V in 1570. These prayers may be understood as an act of contrition and a confession of sin; motives, however, which are here adapted to the moment and to the great action which is about to begin. In the psalm Judica the feeling of our unworthiness is upborne by the joy and power of the Mass. The Confiteor has no note of despondency; its manner is both dramatic and royal. The dominant motive of these prayers is expressed in the antiphon: "I shall go in unto God's altar; unto God who giveth joy to my youth." Their purpose is to attune the soul to the action of the Mass. The private character of these prayers is shown in the manner of their recitation at High Mass.

The Introit is the actual beginning of the public action of the Mass. It is the entrance chant which accompanies the procession of the celebrant and his assistants to

the altar. In its present form it is an abridgment. Formerly it was composed of an antiphon and an entire psalm. The psalm is now reduced to one verse. The Introit varies from one Mass to another according to the season and feast. And being the entrance chant, it strikes the note which dominates throughout all the proper or variable parts of a given Mass.

The Kyrie as we have it is also an abridgment. In ancient times it was the termination of a litany. The litany has been omitted and we have retained this nine-fold plea for mercy—which should be understood not as a cry for pardon arising out of deep misery, but as an expression of longing, of confident desire, for the revelation of that loving kindness of God which is shown to mankind in the Incarnation and which is perpetually renewed in the mystery of the Mass.

The Kyrie is a song of ascent; it is a stairway mounting up to the level of the Gloria—the truly glorious hymn of praise which celebrates the work of redemption. Beginning with the praise of the Father and ending with a reference to the Holy Spirit, the Gloria is chiefly a song of the life-work of the Word made flesh. Glory is restored to God and peace to men by the taking away of sin. For it is sin that denies the glory of God and destroys the peace of mankind. All the four motives of adoration, thanksgiving, reparation, and petition enter into this hymn of praise.

The Collect (one or more) like the Introit belongs to the proper or variable parts of the Mass. Expressing homage to God in its opening phrases, it becomes chiefly a prayer of petition appropriate to the season and feast. It

is the dominant thought of a given day expressed in the form of petition. Though chanted by the celebrant alone, it is, as the name suggests, the united prayer of the assembly. All are gathered into it by the *Dominus vobiscum* and the word *Oremus*, and all join in the final *Amen*.

Thus far the giving part of the Mass of the Catechumens. The action of the Mass up to this point has been a God-ward offering on the part of the whole assembly. The action is now reversed, the receiving part begins, the divine response comes to the listening assembly in the scriptural readings and the sermon.

Ordinarily there are two scriptural readings which we call the Epistle (because generally though not always chosen from one of the Epistles) and the Gospel. Sometimes there are three, one from the Old Testament, one from the Epistles and one from the Gospels. In the early Christian days the number was still larger and the readings were often of considerable length. Musical pieces were introduced between the readings to relieve the monotone. This is the origin of our Gradual, Alleluia, Tract, and Sequence. They also enforce by echo some thought contained in the readings or appropriate to the season.

With dramatic effectiveness the readings bring before the assembly the spokesmen of the divine word. And in the Gospel the Mass of the Catechumens reaches its climax. God who speaks to mankind at sundry times through prophets and apostles, speaks finally through His Son. Our Lord who will shortly unite us with Himself in the sacrificial action, prepares us for that union by His word and example, giving us to understand that the mystery of the Mass is always that of union with Him.

The readings vary from day to day and belong therefore, like the Introit and Collect, to the proper or variable parts of the Mass. People generally are better acquainted with the Epistle and Gospel by reason of their being read in the vernacular. Hence we may advert at this point to the entire system of the variable parts—well known to those who know the Missal—the system namely of the liturgical year. Variable parts occur also in the Mass of the Faithful, but they are more conspicuous in the Mass of the Catechumens, the dominant features of the system being the Epistle and Gospel.

We have observed that from apostolic days an introductory service was deemed necessary in order that the faithful might approach the eucharistic sacrifice not abruptly but with a consciousness enlivened to its meaning and equipped to take part in it. Similarly in the course of liturgical development the eucharistic mystery was allowed to overflow beyond its ordinary formula into a series of variable parts, so that the wealth of its meaning might be expressed in a more ample way throughout the course of the year. These are variations of the one great theme, the mystery of the Word made flesh and abiding in the Eucharist, the theme concentrated in the ordinary of the Mass and set forth in fuller detail in the proper parts from season to season and from day to day. In this sense we review the life of our Lord in the proper parts of the Mass. From Advent to Pentecost the first half of the liturgical year depicts the scenes and teaches the lessons of the visible life of Christ in Palestine. From Pentecost to Advent the second half tells of the continuation of His life and work through the Holy Spirit in Christ's

mystical body, the Church. This is more than holy narrative and spiritual pageantry; it is the real experience of the Church and of every Christian soul, the inward drama of our life in Christ. It binds us throughout the year to the one main theme and purpose—life-union with Christ through the Mass—the assimilation of mankind through Christ to God.

The Gospel is followed by the Creed—a transition piece which brings the Mass of the Catechumens to its end and begins the Mass of the Faithful. In ancient times the Creed was not a part of the Mass; it belonged rather to the solemn rite of Baptism. Gradually it came to be inserted in the Mass—at Rome, so we are told, in the year 1014. It is well fitted for the place it occupies. One thinks of the Lord's question: "Do you believe?"—and the reply: "Yea, Lord, I do." After listening in silence to the scriptural readings, after hearing the word of the Lord—comes this united outburst, this paean of faith. It is a response to the Gospel, and it is also a mighty "Adsum!" with which the assembly enters into the Mass of the Faithful.

## THE MASS OF THE FAITHFUL

The Mass of the Faithful is the actual eucharistic sacrifice, "the breaking of bread," as it is called in the Acts of the Apostles. Like the introductory service, it is divided into two parts, the sacrifice-oblation and the sacrifice-banquet, giving and receiving.

Its first part, the sacrifice-oblation, is subdivided into: 1) The Offertory, and 2) The Canon.

## THE OFFERTORY

SOMEONE has said that priests ought to explain to their people that to contribute to the offertory collection[1] is *an act of worship*. In other words, we need to restore the liturgical understanding of the offertory collection; for we have come to regard it almost exclusively in its merely utilitarian aspect, as means for meeting the material needs and expenses of a parish.

Various circumstances have brought this about. Notably, the Church in our country has been busy with the upbuilding of its whole material fabric. Such things as

[1] Graf, *The Priest at the Altar*, p. 130.

wood and stone, brick and mortar, have loomed large in our mind. All has had to come through the voluntary offerings of the people. Direct appeal had to be made for urgent and specific needs. Besides erecting churches, we have also been obliged to collect for schools, for home and foreign missions, for works of charity, for many purposes which required to be explained to contributors. In all cases it has been necessary to lay emphasis upon the particular need to be met by a given collection. Sermons to this effect are common, whereas sermons on the offertory collection as such are more rare. Stress has been laid on the particular purpose, while the general motive of giving or offering as intrinsically and intimately related to the sacrifice of the Mass has been neglected. It has been taken for granted, and hence, while no doubt it is understood in a general way, it has receded somewhat from our direct view. Collections are taken up at Mass because that is the principal assembly of the people. We perhaps do not stop to consider why they are taken up precisely at the Offertory.

Moreover, we are not unaffected by the general tendency of our times (by no means exclusively American) which looks excessively to the material side of things. In the matter of church collections we are disposed to take a practical rather than a mystical view. The liturgical revival calls back out attention to the liturgical aspect of things, bids us see things as related to the worship of God, and points out the place which the offertory collection had in the ancient liturgy.

A collection of some kind at the celebration of the holy sacrifice, is a custom dating back to the beginnings of the Church, as we may gather from the epistles of St. Paul.

But it is in the fully developed liturgy of some time later as celebrated in Rome, that we find the offertory collection appearing as an impressive and meaningful feature of the Mass. This may be seen in Father Kramp's description, drawn from the ancient Roman ceremonial books.[1]

The faithful of those days understood well that they all partook both in the offering and in the receiving of the Eucharist, both in sacrifice-oblation and in sacrifice-banquet. The ancient ceremonial brought this out very plainly. The faithful approached the altar at the Offertory and at the Communion, first to give and later to receive. The Mass was both their gift to God through Christ and God's gift to them through Christ.

Thus they came to Mass with the offertory spirit in their hearts and with offertory gifts in their hands. Every one brought his personal offering of bread and wine. These are food-stuffs, elements that sustain and nourish life, and hence symbols of all our life and gifts expressing our inward offering of self. They are also, by our Lord's own choice, the elements which are to be changed into His eucharistic body and blood. Christ's offering and our own are made one. The Mass is the offering of the eucharistic Christ and the mystical Christ.[2]

The Roman Mass of the eighth century, as Father Kramp describes it, did not contain all the offertory prayers that we now have. There were only the offertory antiphon and psalm (chanted by the choir while the faithful brought forward their offerings) and (when the offer-

[1] Kramp, *Eucharistia*, Ch. II, p. 22.

[2] On the doctrine of the Mystical Body in the theology of St. Paul, see Duperray-Burke, *Christ in the Christian Life*. See also, Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*.

ings had been placed upon the altar) the "prayer over the gifts," which we call the Secret. Thus the ancient ceremony emphasized the Offertory by deed rather than by word. Besides the gifts of bread and wine which were placed on the altar and consecrated, the faithful also made offerings for the poor and needy.

This offertory ceremony, so clearly and beautifully expressing the united oblation of all the faithful made one in Christ, was not identically the same everywhere throughout the ancient Church. We find it stressed in the Roman rite more than in the Gallican and the Oriental rites. And in the Roman rite the practice was modified in the course of time. For reasons of convenience money offerings were substituted for offerings in kind. The collection takes place to the present day at or just before the Offertory. Its meaning is quite the same as that of the ancient offertory procession. But the modern practice is not as expressive as was the ancient one. To compensate for what we have lost, we have the additional offertory prayers which were not in the ancient rite. They were gradually introduced in medieval times, and in them we say in word what the ancient rite said in a more dramatic way.

We today need to restore the liturgical understanding of the offertory collection for the sake of a better understanding of the entire Mass as an oblation, a sacrifice offered not by Christ alone, nor by the priest alone, but by the entire Christian body made one in Christ.

Ever since the days when the first Protestant leaders launched their attack upon the Mass, denying altogether its sacrificial character, there has been a tendency among Catholic theologians to stress rather exclusively those as-

pects of the Mass which were directly attacked. They have been concerned to show that the Mass is truly the renewal of Christ's sacrifice of Calvary, the sacrifice of human redemption. They have explained in what way it is truly Christ's sacrifice, and have said less of the fact that it is also ours. They have explained it as a sacrifice of propitiation and petition (the points denied by the Protestants) and have said less of it as a sacrifice of adoration and thanksgiving. But in recent times when Catholic theologians are not faced in the same way with the specific exigencies of acute controversy, they again set forth the doctrine of the Mass in its entirety and in correct proportion, in its relation to the whole majestic synthesis of the Catholic faith as made by a St. Thomas in the golden days of scholastic theology.[1]

In the light of such considerations it is not difficult to recognize that our present ordinary way of thinking of the Mass is not altogether adequate. We do think more of what we get out of it than of what we put into it. Consider what stress is laid in popular treatises and in sermons on the "fruits" of the Mass. Its value is urged in terms of its fruits. Certainly these deserve to be made plain. But the rather selfish kind of devotion implied in such exclusive insistence, leaves something to be desired. Is there not place even here for some application of our Lord's words, that it is better to give than to receive? "The whole internal structure of the Mass-drama," says Father Kramp, "is governed by the idea of self-oblation."[2]

[1] See D'Arcy, *The Mass and the Redemption*, pp. 87, 93, 104.

[2] *Eucharistia*, p. 47; see also Kramp, *The Liturgical Sacrifice of the New Law;* and Michel, *My Sacrifice and Yours.*

In order to restore the liturgical understanding of the offertory collection, for the sake of the understanding of the Mass as our offering made in union with our Lord, besides the historical and dogmatic elements here indicated, what can be done further in a visible, ceremonial way? In certain European centers of the liturgical revival it has been found possible to restore in some measure the offertory procession *(Opfergang)*. This is no doubt quite impossible as a gneral practice in our present circumstances.

But we can urge the faithful to make regular use of the beautiful and expressive offertory prayers of the Missal.[1] Moreover, the offerings ought not to be deposited in a mere matter of fact way at the sanctuary rail and thought no more of until the end of the Mass. Why not (as is sometimes done) have the Mass servers bring the offerings from the sanctuary rail and deposit them at the base and to the sides of the altar. Here they will be included in the act of incensing which our bishops are authorized to permit at any chanted Mass.

The use of incense at Mass has a double meaning. Primarily, at least in the Roman rite, the burning and sweet-smelling incense was meant to be a mark of honor to the book of the Gospels and to the prelate before whom it was carried. Secondly, and more notably in the Gallican rite, it signified a hallowing purpose and symbolized the offering of prayer. This second meaning appears more especially in the incensing of the offertory elements of bread and wine upon the altar: and does it not extend farther as the incensing continues and the fragrant clouds envelop

[1] See the article "Suscipiamur" in *Orate Fratres*, Vol. I, No. 5, March 1927.

the whole altar and all those who stand about it and the entire assembly who are, and should be consciously, one united oblation in the sight of God? The words of the offertory prayer at the offering of the chalice are as extensive as the whole offertory spirit of the assembly and its incense-symbol: "May it arise before Thy divine majesty with a pleasing fragrance, for our salvation and that of all mankind."

# THE CANON[1]

THE sacrifice of the Mass is the center of the Church's liturgy, and the Canon is the very heart of the Mass. One might imagine that every Catholic, even though not yet acquainted with the Missal, is quite familiar with the Canon, for it is the chief part of the ordinary of the Mass which is found in every prayer-book. But there is much more in the Canon than appears from a mere reading, even a frequent reading of it. A good literal understanding of the Canon (not to speak of a deep mystical one) requires some knowledge of its history and a careful analysis of its structure.

Let us state first of all what we mean here by the Canon. For owing to reasons which we cannot consider here, the term is used in different ways. As our missals are printed today, we might judge from the page headings that the Canon begins with the words *Te igitur* after the Sanctus and extends to the last Gospel.[2] It was once the custom to regard the Canon in that way and to divide it into two parts, the first extending up to the Pater Noster and called the Canon of Consecration, and the second

[1] See Fortescue, *The Mass;* Vandeur, *La sainte Messe;* Cabrol, "Canon Romain" in *Dictionnaire d'archeologie chretienne et de liturgie.* Special acknowledgment should be made to Dr. Pius Parsch for his articles on the Mass in *Bibel und Liturgie.*

[2] The general rubrics and the ritual directions in the introduction to the Missal seem to understand the Canon as beginning with the Te igitur and extending up to the Pater Noster. See: Rubricae generales, xii, xiii; and Ritus servandus, vii, viii, ix.

from the Pater Noster to the end and called the Canon of Communion. We may add that the Canon as printed in our missals appears to be made up of a series of prayers, very concisely worded and not very evidently interrelated.

We shall here understand the Canon as beginning with the Preface (for so it actually does) and ending with the *Amen* before the Pater Noster. We shall see that it is one continuous prayer, containing various elements it is true, but all built up into a distinctly unified structure with admirable balance and proportion. In union with the Offertory which precedes it, it forms the first part of the Mass of the Faithful or the sacrifice-oblation. The Pater Noster which follows it is the beginning of the sacrifice-banquet.

The Canon-prayer has for its central element the words of consecration, our Lord's own words at the Last Supper: "This is My body; this is My blood." We read in the scriptural accounts of the Last Supper that Jesus took bread and wine and, giving thanks, He blessed them with that unique blessing which made them His body and blood. Mark well that phrase: giving thanks. From it comes our word *Eucharist.* It explains why we call our Christian sacrifice a eucharistic one. It lets us see the meaning of the words in the dialogue at the beginning of the Preface: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." That is: "Let us proceed to offer our eucharistic sacrifice."

Jesus was here eating the Pasch with His disciples, observing the Jewish paschal rite, and at the same time transforming it into the eucharistic sacrifice of the New Law. The Jewish paschal rite was one of thanksgiving for the most signal event in the history of Israel. Its text was

a prayer of thanksgiving which recalled God's mercies to mankind and especially to His chosen people, to Adam, Noah, Abraham and Moses, and above all of thanksgiving for the deliverance of Israel from Egypt and the restoration to the Promised Land. What a new and transcendant meaning had that prayer on Jesus' lips! The ancient image passes and the reality has come. He is the "Lamb of God" and the leader of God's people. He is the redeemer of all mankind from bondage and the restorer of supernatural life.

Thus when the apostles and their successors carried out the bidding of the Lord, to do in commemoration of Him what He had done at the Last Supper, the text of their thanksgiving prayer was the old Jewish text transfigured into a Christian one. Besides recalling the divine mercies shown to the ancient Israel, it lingered on the incomparable ones of the Incarnation. And as time went on it became the custom in the Church, the new Israel, to dwell less upon the old and more upon the new.

In the literature of the early Church we find a description of the Mass given us in one of the writings of St. Justin in the second century (about the year 150). He addressed an Apology, a sort of open letter, to the emperor Antoninus Pius and to the public generally, in which he protests against the calumnious things said about the Christians, and in which he tells among other matters what the Christians actually do in their liturgical assemblies.

St. Justin gives us a description of the Mass,[1] not the text of it. After referring to the Mass of the Catechumens

[1] See the passage from St. Justin's Apology in Appendix, I, p. 70.

with its scriptural reading and sermon, he comes to the Mass of the Faithful. "Then bread and a cup of wine are brought to the president of the brethren, and he, taking them, sends up praise and glory to the Father of all through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and makes thanksgiving at length because we are granted these favors by Him (the Father). When he has ended the prayers and thanksgiving all the people present cry out, saying "Amen."

In St. Justin's description we recognize the long eucharistic prayer in which the words of consecration are enshrined. Its length was not precisely determined but was left, as was to some extent its phraseology, to the inspiration of the celebrant. Thus the Canon-prayer varied somewhat from place to place. In the course of time and after the example of the principal bishops it came to be written out and recited or chanted in an invariable way. The result, however, was not one absolutely uniform type but rather a limited number of types differing somewhat in details and corresponding to the chief sees or patriarchates in the Christian world. These types are the parent-forms of the various rites in the Church today.

Hence among the Christian writings of the fourth century we have portions at least of the actual text of the Canon-prayer, and in a work called the *Apostolic Constitutions* we have a complete text. The exact date of this work is not known. It seems to be about the end of the fourth century. But the work is a compilation made up from older materials so that the text here given (though not a strictly official one) may well be that which was used in the third century. In the *Apostolic Constitutions*

we have a description of the Mass[1] more lengthy than that given by St. Justin, and, what is especially precious, we have here a complete text of the Canon-prayer.

The most obvious feature of the Canon-prayer as given in the *Apostolic Constitutions* is its great length as compared with our Canon in the Roman Missal. It is so long that we can readily understand why for the purposes of public worship a shorter one was desired. But we are fortunate in having this long form preserved in the *Apostolic Constitutions;* for it helps us to understand our Canon in the Roman Missal.

We are able to see that the process of abbreviation was not by the absolute excision of parts but rather by condensation. That is to say, all the elements of the longer form are still present in the shorter one. But they are reduced in wording almost to a minimum. Hence in our text in the Roman Missal the meaning of the Canon-prayer is not brought out with any amplitude of expression. It is, we might say, just summarized. This is sufficient for the purposes of public worship provided we are able by private reading of the longer form to get the full significance of the shorter one.

The comparison shows also that while the same elements are present in both texts, they are not arranged in the same way. The arrangement is more natural, the logical sequence of ideas is more evident in the longer form of the *Apostolic Constitutions.* In the Roman Missal, the text, besides being much condensed, shows a rearrangement of the elements into an order which is highly symmetrical indeed but less obvious.

[1] See Appendix, II, p. 73.

In the *Apostolic Constitutions* the Canon-prayer begins, just as ours does, with the well-known dialogue: "Lift up your hearts. We have them lifted up unto the Lord." It proceeds as a hymn of praise and thanksgiving in which the bishop or priest chants the infinite attributes and the wonderful works of God. The entire prayer is trinitarian in its structure like our Gloria and Credo; that is, it sings in turn of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.

The sixfold story of creation is first recounted, the order and beauty of the natural universe serving as a prelude to the higher works of grace. Then the account of man's fall and the promise of redemption; and the long series of divine mercies shown to mankind throughout the ages, to Abel, Seth, Noah, Abraham and Moses. In this way the prayer arrives at what was its climax in the Jewish ritual, the remembrance of the bondage in Egypt, now seen to be an image of the universal misery wrought by sin, and of the deliverance and restoration, the image of Christian redemption and regeneration. Here the sublimity of the theme causes the great prayer to leap its bounds and to soar aloft to the company of the angels and archangels, while the whole assembly joints with the celebrant in an outburst of praise, the threefold *Sanctus* borrowed from the prophesy of Isaias.

Thus far the Canon-prayer has proceeded in the thought of the heavenly Father. The chant as now resumed by the celebrant alone becomes a recital of the life and the redeeming work of the Word made flesh: His coming in fulfilment of the age-old promise, His birth of the Virgin-Mother, His preaching and His miracles, His

sufferings, His final passion and death, His glorious resurrection and ascension. The high narrative thus reaches the scene which it commemorates. The Last Supper is re-enacted, the Lord's own words of consecration are repeated, along with His bidding: "Do this in commemoration of Me." And so, mindful of His passion and resurrection and ascension and the promise of His second coming, the great prayer rises to the supreme height of its oblation in thanksgiving. The all-holy Lord is offered again in sacrifice, the Christ both of Calvary and of Tabor, and all His brethren in union with Him.

Then, as the Lord's work on earth is continued by the Paraclete whom He sends, the Canon-prayer now begs that the Holy Spirit may descend with benediction and grace upon all those who offer and who partake in this holy sacrifice. This petition is drawn out in a series of mementos or invocations, for the hierarchy and clergy, for the civil government, for all the saints of times past, for the whole body of the faithful, for the virgins and widows, for the children of the flock, for those in illness and affliction, for foes also and persecutors, for those without the light of faith, for the catechumens and penitents, for temporal needs, for the blessings of fair weather and good harvests.

The great prayer closes as it began, on a note of worship and thanksgiving, in a doxology to the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. And the whole assembly, having followed the prayer as its own, cries out a united *Amen*.[1]

[1] In the early centuries the Canon was recited or chanted aloud by the celebrant.

As we turn now to the Roman Missal, we find by comparison that in our Preface the long narrative of Old Testament events has been condensed into the brief phrase: "*semper et ubique gratias agere*—always and everywhere to give thanks." The narrative of the life of our Lord has been placed in advance of the Sanctus and has been distributed throughout a series of Prefaces for the various seasons, so that we must combine those of Christmas, Epiphany, the Passion, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost in order to reconstruct something like the Preface of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. The mementos which come toward the end of the Canon-prayer in the longer form are reduced in our Missal to six, three placed before the Consecration and three placed after it. Immediately before the Consecration a prayer for blessing on the oblation and the offerers has been inserted, balancing the somewhat similar prayer which follows the Consecration. There are also a few further additions of minor clauses.

One is curious to know how these changes came to be made. The question is an extremely difficult one. The date, first of all, cannot be determined with any exactness; partly because the records are scanty, and partly because the changes were not likely made at any one time but gradually over a considerable number of year.

We know that the present form of our Roman Canon is very old. We find it just as at present in the Gelasian Sacramentary, which dates perhaps from the early years of the seventh century. But we have reason for knowing that our Canon is considerably older than the seventh century. Perhaps it is safe to say that the main work of its composition dates from about the beginning of the fifth century

and that minor changes were still made during the course of the fifth and sixth centuries.

Nor can we be certain that the longer text from which our Canon was abbreviated is precisely that of the *Apostolic Constitutions*. But it was quite likely abbreviated from some text very similar to that one. As has been said, in the early centuries the texts were not all uniform, but they all seem to have been rather lengthy. We can readily understand that a text so long as that of the *Apostolic Constitutions* could not serve permanently as an official one for all occasions. As it became necessary for various reasons to insist upon an official text (not for the whole Church but for a patriarchate) that text must needs be one of moderate length. Thus we find that both in the East where the Greek language was used, and in the West where the Latin was used, the official texts that were adopted were shorter than that of the *Apostolic Constitutions*.

In Rome the process of abbreviation was carried out to a very pronounced degree, owing partly to the genius of the Latin language and Roman character. Latin is noted for its conciseness and its gravity as compared with the more redundant and flowery Greek. And relatively to other regions of the Latin West, these qualities appear especially in the Roman liturgical texts. They are distinguished by their brevity and clarity, by a clear-cut quality in thorough accord with the dogmatic definiteness and precision that are characteristic of Rome, the center of authority and unity.

It is, however, by no means the brevity of dry definition. There is something exceedingly noble and beauti-

ful in this terse and austere manner. It is a classic expression in which the majesty of God and the loyal allegiance of man are instantly suggested, and with such force that copious wording is unnecssary. At the same time there is a warmth of emotion in this ancient Roman style, none the less true and tender for that it is measured and restrained. The beauty of the old Roman liturgical texts is akin to that of the contemporary architecture, the basilicas with their mosaics. It is perfectly sincere and free from all affectation. It has an innate sense of simplicity and dignity, and by virtue of these it is able to attain to its heights of unearthly grandeur.

Besides the question of the comparative brevity of the Roman Canon, there is the further one, and a very difficult one, of the peculiar arrangement of its component parts, an arrangement which is less natural than that of the Canon in the *Apostolic Constitutions*. How are we to account for the Roman arrangement? Scholars have puzzled much over this question and have advanced a variety of hypotheses. Their theories, as reviewed by Fortescue and Cabrol, do not take into account to any great extent the fact that the style of the Roman liturgy may have had considerable influence in determining the arrangement of the elements of its Canon. One would hesitate to say that the style was the decisive factor and that it furnishes the solution of the problem. But it may well have been a factor of very notable importance. And in any case it certainly deserves to be taken into account as a help to the understanding of our Canon as we have it.

The Roman liturgical style is a very definite thing, governed by well-determined rules. It has often been de-

scribed as monumental, because, being the style of public worship, it is conceived not primarily in an intimate and personal way but in a communal and generic way. It is worked out in broad, outstanding and imposing lines. It is thoroughly architectonic. Again, it has been described as lapidary, so much does it resemble the cutting and settings of gems, as for example in the fashioning of the Collects; or in its larger features like the Canon, so like is its way to the composition of the mosaics with their formal and highly symmetrical arrangement of parts. It is a well known fact that the structure of the Collects is governed by precise rules. Is it not likely that the demands of style had a similar influence in the arrangement of the Canon?

Let us consider then the structure of the Roman Canon as it is analyzed for us by Dr. Pius Parsch. Its symmetry is perfect—and quite astonishing when one observes it for the first time. It is possibly the key to the whole arrangement? Does the style of the mosaic in the vault of the apse reflect that of the mystery enacted beneath it? However that may be, the analysis will help us wonderfully in understanding this venerable prayer, the heart of the Mass, as it has been handed down to us from ancient times.[1]

The central idea of our Canon-prayer is the same as that expressed in our present custom which prescribes that there be a crucifix as the central object on our altars. Similarly in ancient times the *crux gemmata,* the richly jeweled cross, and later the image of Christ in majesty, was shown

[1] See the frontispiece and description of same in Appendix, IV, p. 88 ff.

in the great mosaic that adorned the apse of the basilica. It is the idea expressed in our Lord's own words: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself."[1] This idea is the focus from which all else in the Canon radiates and toward which all else converges.

The Mass is the renewal of the great sacrifice of Calvary. But in its liturgical form the renewal does what Jesus ordered to be done in commemoration of Him, that is, what He did at the Last Supper.

Hence the central words of the Canon are a group of three prayers which together are the immediate commemoration of the Last Supper. The first of these, *Qui pridie* (Who the day before He suffered), introduces the words of consecration pronounced over the bread. The second, *Simili modo* (In like manner when the supper was done), introduces the words pronounced over the wine. The third, *Unde et memores* (Wherefore . . . calling to mind), is the explicit commemoration in which we offer "the holy Bread of life eternal and the Chalice of unending salvation."

The words of consecration and of oblation in remembrance, the Body given for us and the Blood shed for us, and these offered as on Calvary, this is the nucleus of the Canon-prayer around which all the rest is arranged as in concentric circles.

The central element is encircled by a group of prayers, two before and two after the Consecration, in which the motive is a double one of oblation and invocation; before

[1] John 12, 32.

the Consecration the two prayers *Hanc igitur* (We further beseech Thee) and *Quam oblationem* (Do Thou deign to bless), and after the Consecration the two prayers *Supra quae* (Which do Thou deign to regard) and *Supplices Te* (Most humbly we implore Thee). If we look more closely we shall see how admirably these pairs are balanced. The *Hanc igitur* contains a triple petition for peace in our present days, for salvation at their end and for the eternal joys of heaven, balancing in the *Supra quae* the triple citation of the sacrifices of the innocent Abel, the obedient Abraham and the royal Melchisedech. The *Quam oblationem* with its emphasis of the oblation ready on the altar balances the *Supplices Te* with its upward glance to the altar in heaven.

The next circle is made up of prayers in which the motive is chiefly that of intercession or petition for blessing. The balance here is quite evident. The mementos which in the *Apostolic Constitutionh* come toward the end of the Canon are reduced to six and placed three before and three after the Consecration; before the Consecration the three: *Te igitur* (And now most gracious Father), *Memento* (Be mindful of Thy servants) and *Communicantes* (United in Thy holy Church), after the Consecration the three: *Memento* (Be mindful of Thy servants), *Nobis quoque* (To us also, sinners) and *Per quem haec* (Through Whom Thou dost ever provide). This is the circle of the redeemed universe, giving praise and receiving benediction, testifying to the words of the Redeemer: "I will draw all things to Myself." The prayers of this group include the ancient diptych readings, the names of persons to be remembered in the Mass. The last prayer

of the group is one for blessing upon the fruits of the earth, because all nature is embraced in the work of Redemption, even its material elements. In former times it was customary to introduce at this point various special blessings, and we still have here on Thursday of Holy Week the blessing of the oil for the sick. One cannot fail to notice the balance of the memento for the living and the memento for the dead and that of the two lists of saints before and after the Consecration. We may observe how this placing of the saints helps to distribute throughout the Canon-prayer the tone of glory that belongs to the whole of it. The faithful departed are said to be at rest in the sleep of peace and to be asleep in Christ. We ourselves, although sinners, are said to be God's holy people who look forward with humble confidence to some share of heavenly bliss in union with the saints.

Finally, the outermost circle of the Canon-prayer is made up of the Preface *(Sursum corda)* at the beginning and the Doxology *(Per Ipsum)* at the end. In both the motive is one of praise and thanksgiving, the eucharistic motive which is never absent and which characterizes the Canon-prayer from beginning to end. The Preface with its choral *Sanctus* balances the Doxology with its choral *Amen*. The Doxology is much shorter than the Preface, for the Canon is followed immediately by the Pater Noster which begins the sacrifice-banquet.

Let the reader now study the Canon-prayer in the light of this analysis and this comparison with the text in the *Apostolic Constitutions;* let him meditate upon it in the light of the great fundamental dogmas of the Christian faith, the Trinity, the Incarnation and Redemption,

the Church as the mystical body of Christ and the communion of saints; and then let him read the Secret of the ninth Sunday after Pentecost: "Grant us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, worthily to approach these mysteries; for as often as this memorial-sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is made operative." The honoring of God and the hallowing of man, the supreme interests of time and eternity as we opproach them in our present life, are concentrated in the Mass and in its central Canon-prayer.

Can anyone, conscious of his membership in Christ, so study the Canon and not feel the desire to take part in it? Consider the prayer immediately following the Consecration in which as "God's holy people" we offer the holy Bread of life eternal and the Chalice of unending salvation. God's holy people does not mean the priest alone. It is a phrase which points directly to the words of St. Peter in his first Epistle[1]: "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation." And these words of St. Peter have been quoted insistently by Pope Pius XI as meaning the general priesthood of all the faithful and their intimate part in the offering of the Mass.

People sometimes speak of "offering up their holy Communion." The expression shows how poorly they understand the Mass and especially the Canon-prayer and their part in it. Their purpose is good; they are prompted by that innate desire of the human soul to offer, a desire which finds its supreme expression in the holy sacrifice of the Mass. But let them do as the Church does. Nowhere does the liturgical text speak of offering one's holy Com-

[1] I. Pet. 2, 9.

munion. Whereas throughout the Canon-prayer (as in the Offertory which precedes it) we are invited over and over to join in the oblation, to share in the heavenly sacrifice, and so to receive the most sacred Body and Blood of the Lord.

## THE SACRIFICE-BANQUET

THE eucharistic sacrifice, or the Mass of the Faithful, has two main parts. It exemplifies in the highest degree that reciprocity of heaven and earth which is the essence of all prayer. It is conformed to that fundamental law which divides every prayer into a giving part and a receiving part. Consider the classic examples of prayer, like the Our Father, the Hail Mary, or the Confiteor, and observe how they all conform to this law. So in our supreme prayer, the eucharistic Sacrifice, we have the sacrifice-oblation and the sacrifice-banquet, in which we first give ourselves to God in Christ and then God gives Himself to us in Christ.

An unfortunate modern habit is that by which people are inclined to forget the sacrificial character of holy Communion and to regard it as something separate from the Mass. Many communicants seems to consider the Mass merely as that priestly act which brings about the real presence of the Lord for the sake of Communion and exposition. They receive Communion with little or no thought of its sacrificial character. It is for them a visit with the Lord, compared to some minor incident in His life on earth, like His visit to the house of Zacheus or to that of Martha and Mary. This attitude is confirmed by modern devotions for Communion which tend to cultivate too exclusively the private and non-sacrificial aspects of eucharistic piety and which offer impediment to active participation in the sacrifice of the Mass.

The fault reaches an extreme where holy Communion is received before the Mass begins. The Mass of the Catechumens is then given over to prayers of thanksgiving after Communion. The Mass of the Faithful in its turn is filled up with miscellaneous prayers, spiritual reading and the singing of hymns. Active participation in the Mass becomes quite impossible, for its sequence is radically and completely disturbed. No one would think of inverting the order of the Our Father or the Hail Mary by saying the second part first. Why is there no hesitation in the case of the Mass? The reason of course is that an anomaly which is obvious enough in a brief prayer-formula is not so apparent in a longer composition like the Mass; and the further reason that many who are otherwise devout and well educated have not studied sufficiently the structure of the Mass.

In all the ancient religions, Jewish and pagan, sacrifice conforms to the fundamental law of prayer. The idea of a mutual giving and receiving is brought out more or less explicitly. In the Jewish religion, with its elaborate ritual, it appear especially in those sacrifices which are called peace-offerings, the highest form of Jewish sacrifice. A prominent feature of these was the sacrificial meal, a feast in which priest and people banqueted with God. (One recalls how frequently Jesus used the figure of the banquet as an illustration of final union with God in heaven.) Sacrifice with banquet as an integral part appears notably in the Jewish paschal rite, the chief of all the Jewish annual observances, a memorial of the capital event of their national deliverance, a type of the universal human redemption by the Word made flesh, of that work

which was consummated on Calvary and which is continued in the Mass.

How is it then with our Christian eucharistic Sacrifice? Has it also the banquet feature as an integral part of the sacrifice? Or is holy Communion something distinct from the Mass, so that it may be received regularly outside the Mass with no regard for the sequence of the Mass and with no thought of its sacrificial character?

We may surely expect that the Christian sacrifice will not be lacking in an important feature which appears in inferior religions. We may expect that it will manifest in a more perfect way what its ancient predecessors tried to express in their measure. The Jewish paschal rite was sacrifice with banquet. And it is precisely this rite which the Redeemer in the supreme hours of His life on earth transformed into the eucharistic Sacrifice of the New Law.

Was the Last Supper celebrated with no thought of sacrifice? Was it not celebrated in the shadow of the Cross? Are not our Savior's words filled with the sense of His passion even now begun? The bread and wine which He gave to His apostles were not His body and blood simply, but His body "given for you" and His blood "shed for you." Hence when St. Paul recounts the Last Supper in his first Epistle to the Corinthians he speaks plainly of the sacrificial character of holy Communion: "For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come."[1] The purpose of holy Communion is to make Christ's work of redemption operative in us, to give us not Christ simply but the

[1] I. Cor. 11, 26.

sacrificial Christ. How much need there is for insistence here may be seen in the disintegration of Protestantism today. For Protestantism in its beginnings denied the sacrificial character of holy Communion.

A second fault in our present attitude toward holy Communion which greatly needs correction is our habit of regarding Communion as a personal and private devotion almost to the utter exclusion of its social significance. The modern prayer-book has the individual point of view. It loves, for example, to dwell on the thought that Jesus comes to me quite as if there were no one else in all the world. The intimacy of the soul's union with Christ is indeed a precious thought. But it must not imply forgetfulness of others. Is not the experience of my soul equalled by everyone else who wills? Did not Christ die for all men? Are we not baptized into one body, the mystical body of Christ? A banquet is a social thing, an instance of many made one. The Eucharist is our social bond in Christ. "For we being many," says St. Paul, "are one body—all that partake of the one bread."[1]

The Christians of ancient days had a sense of solidarity, a social consciousness which we lack today, because they had an understanding such as we have not of the social significance of the holy Eucharist. Ever since the sad catastrophe of the 16th century and throughout the subsequent years of controversy, Catholic unity has expressed itself chiefly in terms of loyalty to the Church as against outsiders, rather than in terms of devotion to the Church for the reason of her own intrinsic nature as the fellowship of love, the mystical body of Christ. We have

[1] I. Cor. 10, 17.

thought of the Church as an organization rather than as an organism, in terms, that is, of external rather than internal union. Hence when the nature of the Church is set forth in the old, traditional, pre-Protestant way, in such a book as Karl Adam's *The Spirit of Catholicism*, many devout Catholics learn as by a veritable revelation that the Church is the mystical body of Christ. They see clearly once more that in this mystical body the inner binding agency is the eucharistic Christ. They exclaim once more with St. Augustine: "O sacrament of love! O seal of unity! O bond of charity!"

Bearing in mind the sacrificial character and the social character of holy Communion, let us consider the structure of the sacrifice-banquet. It begins with the Our Father, a transition piece, its first part echoing the sacrifice-oblation and its second part introducing the sacrifice-banquet. The two parts of the Our Father correspond to the two parts of the angelic song: glory to God and peace to men. Glory to God is the dominant note of the sacrifice-oblation and peace to men that of the sacrifice-banquet. How wonderfully the meaning of the Our Father is brought out in the action of the Mass! Its second part foretells the entire sacrifice-banquet. The receiving of the heavenly Bread, union with God and fellowmen in the bond of charity and forgiveness, security from evil in Christ—all these are comprised in the one dominant word *peace*.

In the liturgical text the assembly of the faithful is called the family of God. The Our Father is the table-prayer of God's children who are gathered about the altar-table to receive their daily Bread. The fruits of this union of charity are summed up in the word *peace*. The prayer

following the Our Father says this at once. Growing out of the last petition of the Our Father, it introduces directly the idea of peace.

Peace to men of good-will, as sung by the angels at Bethlehem, is no mere casual blessing. It expresses the entire meaning of the Incarnation to mankind. Our divine Lord uses the word in the same way to express the whole purpose and effect of His work of human redemption. Peace is the legacy of His life to His apostles in the hour of parting: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth do I give unto you."[1] And as the power of His sacrificial death is made manifest in His resurrection, His greeting to His apostles on His return to them is a promise fulfilled, it is redemption accomplished: "Peace be to you."

In the eucharistic Sacrifice Christ's work of redemption continues to operate. And in its banquet part the holy Sacrifice is the gift of the Christ who "reconciles all things" by His death and resurrection, the peace-giving Christ, as the angels promised and as He himself declared in those supreme hours when He died and rose again. Thus the peace-giving character of holy Communion is identified with its sacrificial character. St. Paul, who says of Christ that "He is our peace,"[2] says also that He brings peace "through the blood of His cross."[3]

In the Acts of the Apostles the eucharistic Sacrifice is called "the breaking of bread," a name suggesting a

[1] John 14, 27.
[2] Eph. 2, 14.
[3] Col. 1, 20.

community meal and accentuating the social character of the holy Eucharist. The altar breads of ancient times were in the form of ordinary bread and the ceremony of breaking and distribution required some time, by which the social character of the sacrifice-banquet was all the more apparent. Eventually for reasons of convenience and reverence the altar breads came to be prepared in their present form, and the ceremony of breaking was confined to the one larger host prepared for the celebrant. Thus the ceremony itself and its social meaning have been lost somewhat to the sight and mind of the people.

In ancient times this ceremony of breaking was preceded by the kiss of peace, a gesture expressing the mutual charity of those who "all eat the same bread" and who share in the peace of Christ. Today the kiss of peace is extended only at solemn Mass to those immediately about the altar, and thus there is some further loss as regards the ancient social understanding of the Eucharist. The kiss of peace is now placed after the Agnus Dei, whereas of old it came, in the Roman rite, just before "the breaking of the bread." The change of location is only a slight one. The kiss of peace in both cases precedes the receiving of Communion and the meaning is the same in either case.

There are still other points of meaning attached to the ceremonies before Communion which were plain to the faithful of ancient times and which are not generally understood today. In these present days when the need of Catholic social action is becoming more and more apparent, it is especially important that we hearken to the lessons which the liturgy brings in this regard from the primitive apostolic age. Holy Communion is more than a

private devotion; it is the bond of our social solidarity in Christ; it should inspire and guide all our social action.

Since the ancient ceremony of the breaking of the bread took some time, it was accompanied by the chant of the Agnus Dei. At the present time the correspondence of word and action is not absolutely precise. The Agnus Dei is probably regarded by many simply as a musical piece not related to any particular act. Hence attention should be given to the deep significance of the combination. The Agnus Dei expresses the sacrifice motive. The Christ whom we receive is the Lamb of God who brings pardon and peace "by the blood of His cross." Observe the association of ideas: the community repast, the sacrificial death of the Lord, and the prayer for peace. The mystery of our salvation is being enacted in a corporate drama. "As often as this memorial-sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is made operative."[1]

The group of three prayers following the Agnus Dei were not in the liturgical text in ancient times. They are medieval additions, once private prayers of preparation for Communion, and for their beauty and appropriateness reckoned worthy to be inserted here. The meaning of these, and of the remaining prayers which accompany the receiving of holy Communion, is evident enough. But we may pause to observe that the Communion antiphon was in ancient times the musical piece which accompanied the distribution of holy Communion to the faithful. It varies with the season and feast and expresses the manifold riches of the eucharistic union with Christ. Having reference to all the people, it should not be overlooked by them.

[1] Secret, Ninth Sunday after Pentecost.

Modern individualism in eucharistic devotion causes many communicants to neglect the official prayers after Communion and to withdraw from the action of the Mass in order to give themselves to private converse with the divine Lord. The liturgical prayers which the Church has appointed should be our guide in our private devotion. If the former are neglected there is danger that the latter too may be slighted by many communicants.

The official prayers after Communion are brief. Indeed, who that knows the Missal has not remarked how quickly the Mass seems to terminate. When one recalls the preparation in the Mass of the Catechumens, the time occupied by the Offertory, the gradual ascent of the Canon —why does the end come almost suddenly? The holy Eucharist is received, a few prayers are said—and all is over.

But is it really over? Or does the Church wish us to feel that the Mass is never over, that it does not come to an end? The official prayers are brief because the Church wishes simply to suggest some line of thought and to leave us then to our private thanksgiving. And more than that, it is intended that we shall go forth from the Mass not with the sense of something ended but of something begun, that we shall carry its divine force out into our daily lives, into our homes, into our work, into our social activities.

Consider the Post-communion of the Sunday within the octave of the Ascension: "Repleti, Domine, muneribus sacris: da, quaesumus; ut in gratiarum semper actione maneamus.—Grant, we beseech thee, O Lord, that replenished with thy sacred gifts we may always abide in the giving of thanks." To abide in the giving of thanks means

to abide in the Eucharist; not merely a quarter-hour of thanksgiving but a permanent eucharistic consciousness. The liturgy enforces this idea in more than one place. We find it again, with an added note of exultation, in the Post-communion of the second Sunday after Easter: 'Praesta nobis, quaesumus omnipotens Deus: ut vivificationis tuae gratiam consequentes, in tuo semper munere gloriemur.—Grant, we beseech thee, O almighty God, that we who receive thy quickening grace may ever glory in thy gift."

## THE MASS THE COMMUNITY DRAMA OF THE CHRIST-LIFE

THROUGHOUT our analysis of the structure of the Mass in the preceding chapters, we have had in mind not Low Mass but High Mass. It is time now to say this explicitly. To say that the Mass is normally High Mass will no doubt cause surprise to many who know the High Mass only as a rare exception. In our large parishes with perhaps five or six Masses on Sundays, only one of these is High Mass, and it is not the one best attended.

Thus the great majority of Catholics hardly know the Mass except as Low Mass. High Mass means to them only the addition of certain musical features, which, moreover, they do not greatly care for. They have no idea of active participation in the liturgical sense. They "assist at Mass" in the sense of standing by, being present while the Mass is celebrated, "mute spectators" they are called in a papal letter. They occupy themselves with favorite private devotions. They expect by their presence and by a general intention "to share in the fruits of the Mass."—The Mass is something done for them; it is not at the same time something done by them.

But High Mass is not simply Mass with music. For we sometimes have music at Low Mass. Thus, there is "the children's Mass," often quite filled with hymn-singing, and yet it is Low Mass. Again, the nuptial Mass is frequently Low Mass with certain musical numbers de-

termined not by the liturgy but by the dictates of sentiment and fashion.

The desire to occupy the children in some profitable way at Mass is a good one. But we have been satisfied with almost any devotional expedient that will keep the children from becoming restless and mischievous. We have not found a method that will teach them and train them to understand the Mass and to take part in it. Indeed we have done harm in the sense that hymn-singing and the recitation of miscellaneous prayers have accustomed the children to ignore the action of the Mass. Their attention is called to the altar only when the bell rings. When they have outgrown the children's Mass and are left to themselves they do not know how to proceed and they easily drop into the ranks of the mere onlookers. However, in recent years we have begun to find a better way for the children.

Indeed, whether for children or adults, the unfortunate situation promises soon to become a thing of the past. The remedy has been found in a return to the popular use of the official Mass-prayers. In ever increasing numbers people now follow the Mass in the Missal, step by step and from beginning to end. The use of the official text brings with it a considerable understanding of the ceremonies. Moreover, one cannot use the Missal long without coming under the spell of the community spirit that pervades it. It is distinctly community prayer, not mere private devotion. The ancient feeling of Christian fellowship, the consciousness of the one body of the mystical Christ, awakens in those who pray the Mass with the Church. They want now to do it all together. They

feel that something is lacking at Low Mass. The Missal evidently is not merely to be read; where circumstances permit parts of it at least fairly demand to be chanted aloud.

Thus we come to see what the ancient Church knew as a matter of course—that the Mass is normally High Mass, the eucharistic sacrifice of the Christian community, celebrated in a corporate way. The gradual restoration of High Mass is therefore part of the program announced by Pope Pius X, the active participation of all the faithful in the sacred mysteries. Needless to say this does not mean the discontinuance of Low Mass. Low Mass will always be necessary in its circumstances, and in a secondary place it has its own distinct charm. But that charm is best appreciated by those who know that the Mass is primarily High Mass. For so indeed it is by its intrinsic nature and according to the practice of the ancient Church.

Fortescue says: "The greater simplicity of Low Mass might lead people to think it the primitive form; on the contrary, it is a late abridgment." The Mass originally and by its nature is High Mass, that is, the official worship of the Church as the one mystical body of Christ, the united prayer of the whole community in which all should participate according to their place and function in the Church.

Throughout Christian antiquity there was no Low Mass as we have it. It is true that the Mass was not always celebrated with equal solemnity nor with large numbers present. The Masses on anniversaries at the tombs of the martyrs, for example, must have been less public in that sense. Yet neither were they strictly private in the modern

sense. They were still corporate in that all who were present took part. Moreover, these cases were exceptional and we are not well informed about them. Nearly all the information we have from ancient times is about what we would call High Mass. The bishop offered the Mass surrounded by his clergy who offered with him, as did in their measure the whole assembly of the faithful. The Mass was regarded as the property and the action of the entire community, and not as the individual prerogative of each priest.

The custom of Low Mass developed gradually in later antiquity and in the Middle Ages. Population was no longer concentrated as it had been in urban centers; the level of education had fallen; the vicissitudes of war had disturbed the discipline and the liturgical practice of the Church; a new social order was arising, with a more pronounced individualism and with less of the ancient sense of fellowship; the development of the theology of the propitiatory value of the Mass and the custom of celebrating Masses for particular intentions led to the celebration of Mass daily by each priest.

In our own days we are still under the sway of circumstances, some of very long standing and others of more recent date, which offer obstacles to our understanding and to our outward expression of the community character of our eucharistic sacrifice. But the present liturgical revival points unmistakably to the coming restoration of High Mass. We had best let it come gradually and without undue forcing. For inward understanding should always prepare the way for outward efforts. Nor need we here consider the various objections that may be raised—the lack

of time, the present unfavorable attitude of people toward High Mass, the difficulties regarding congregational chant —for these objections will likewise lose their force in a gradual way.

The beautiful essay of Mrs. Justine B. Ward on the Gregorian chant, recently reprinted by The Liturgical Press,[1] has long waited for the recognition it deserves. Who knows but what now there may come at any time a real awakening by which we shall see the music question in the true light. Heretofore we have persisted in regarding church music primarily as music, and as an accessory of divine worship. Actually it is liturgy first and music second. It is not just prayerful music; it is musical prayer.

The desire for general active participation in the holy sacrifice, which will ultimately restore the congregational chant of High Mass, has produced, by way of introduction to something still better, the practice of congregational recitation of parts of the Mass. This is sometimes called *missa recitata,* or again *the dialog Mass* (a satisfactory name has not yet been found) in which the congregation recites aloud the responses and other parts which are sung by the choir at High Mass. The precise method varies somewhat, and there has been difference of opinion both as to the method and as to the advisability of the practice altogether. Hence it may be observed here: that the practice seems praiseworthy and desirable as a step toward a more general participation of the faithful in the Mass and toward the restoration of the complete High Mass; that it is to be recommended where circumstances are favorable and where there is no danger of abuse; and

[1] *The Chant of the Church.*

above all, that the Congregation of Rites has issued two decrees in the matter, the first ordering that the practice may not be introduced without the permission of the local bishop, and the second stating that the Canon of the Mass must not be recited aloud.

We should bear in mind in this matter to take the rules for High Mass as our guide. For the High Mass is our ideal which we try to reach accordingly as circumstances permit, and its rubrics are carefully and clearly determined. The Mass is a unified action and we should hesitate to adopt any measures which tend to produce a service for the people separate from that at the altar. We should also bear in mind the distribution of roles prescribed by the rubrics and based on the nature of the Mass-drama. There should be no confusion of the roles of the celebrant, the choir and the congregation.

We should therefore distinguish the parts of the Mass as follows: 1) those belonging to the celebrant or his assistants at the altar, viz. the Collect, Epistle, Gospel, Preface and Pater Noster, as well as the phrases addressed to the people, such as Dominus vobiscum or Ite missa est; 2) those belonging to the choir (whose place is properly in the sanctuary), viz. the Introit, Gradual, Offertory and Communion; 3) those belonging to the entire congregation, viz. the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei, as well as the responses to the celebrant.

Such is the distribution of parts prescribed by the liturgy. Our present circumstances do not permit this observance in many churches as regards the choir and the congregation. The proper or variable parts belong to the choir, and the common or unchanging parts belong to the peo-

ple. But in modern times the people have not been prepared to do their part and have had to relinquish it to the choir. However, a beginning has been made in our schools, and at the present time the congregational chant of the common parts by the children, while not yet a general custom, is by no means a rare thing.

Meanwhile the choir has become so absorbed in doing the part which naturally belongs to the congregation that it has neglected its own part. Until recently the proper parts of the Mass were simply not sung at all. And where now they are sung the rendition often contrasts strangely with the harmonized Glorias and Credos. For the modern composers of Mass-music have expended their efforts on the common parts (which ought to be sung by the congregation in plain-chant) and have nothing to offer in the modern style in the proper parts. Perhaps we may see here a reason why many Catholic musicians and singers have not shown greater enthusiasm for the reform of church music as inaugurated by the Holy See.

Whether in regard to music or to anything that pertains to the outward expression of the community character of the Mass, the ideal set before us by ecclesiastical authority is not determined merely by arbitrary wish nor by mere devotion to liturgical archeology. It is the ideal intrinsic to the Mass itself as the community drama of the Christ-life, the prayer-action of Christ in His mystical body. Hence a right understanding and right celebration of the Mass requires a profound consideration of the dogmas of our faith, the Incarnation and Redemption, the life of sanctifying Grace, the Church as the mystical body of Christ.

The purpose of the present book is to indicate the broad outlines of the Mass-structure, and this is done briefly in order that clearness may not suffer by abundance of detail. We cannot here consider at any length the theology of the Mass and must be content to refer readers to the list of books given in our Foreword. It seems necessary however to indicate a few points.

The work of our divine Lord in the redemption of mankind is two-fold. He takes away the sins of the world, and He gives a supernatural life. The average Catholic thinks mostly of the negative aspect of the redemption, the taking away of sin. But our Lord Himself stresses the positive aspect when He says: "I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly."[1]

Modern theologians have been inclined to stress too exclusively the juridic aspect of redemption, as a ransom of mankind from a state of sin (whereas it is positively the union of God and man by love and grace), and hence in the theology of the Mass they have emphasized in a corresponding way its propitiatory purpose. The Mass is indeed a sacrifice of propitiation, but it is more than just that. It is the renewal of the work of redemption in its positive as well as its negative aspect. Our Lord does more than take away our sin; He unites us to Himself.

To sum up in one brief phrase the right meaning of Christian redemption, we may say that it is "incorporation in Christ." Our Lord redeems us by incorporating us in Himself. Redemption is a process of the union of God and man. But not merely a process of legal reconciliation.

[1] John 10, 10.

It is a true interior vital union, a bringing into our inmost being of new supernatural forces which heal and elevate and transform us. Christ comes and brings a more abundant life, not merely as it were by a handing over to us, but rather by drawing us into His own life.

The Incarnation is a meeting-place, where God descends and man is uplifted. The divine Son brings from the bosom of the most holy Trinity the very life of God, that we may be lifted up to share in it, that God may dwell in us by a new supernatural immanence, that we may be new and nobler creatures—indeed no longer creatures merely but children of God, endowed with a divine life, the life of the Son of God made man. The Son of God becomes man so that we may become the sons of God by a wonderful adoption. "As many as receive Him, to them He gives the power to become the sons of God."[1]

The divine life into which we are drawn is commonly called the life of sanctifying grace. That is an abstract term, it is the language of the theologian. Let us say in a more concrete and a more forceful way that it is the Christ-life in us. For Christ has incorporated us in Himself, He abides in us and we in Him. Let us say therefore not merely that Christ gives us life, but that He is our life.[2] St. Paul's words are true of all of us: "Christ liveth in me."

The word incorporation as we use it in the language of law and commerce means obviously the union of several and perhaps many individuals in one body. Incorporation in Christ is more than the union of the individual soul with Him. It means also the union of many souls with

[1] John 1, 12.

[2] See Vonier, *The Christian Mind*, p. 13.

each other in Him. And herein we apprehend the deepest nature of the Church, while at the same time we see at once why the Church must be one and catholic. The Church is the visible body of all those who are incorporated in Christ. The Church is therefore in a sense identical with Christ, the mystical body of Christ.

This conception of the Church as the mystical body of Christ is the traditional doctrine of the Christian teachers and writers of ancient and medieval times. We have lost sight of it to some extent in modern times owing partly to the controversy with Protestantism. For Protestantism denied the divine character of the Church's outward organization, and hence it became necessary to lay great stress upon that aspect of the Church. This outward aspect is of great importance, and the mistake made by Protestantism has become more and more evident in its own gradual disintegration. But according to the sacramental principle which is everywhere present throughout the Christian religion, the outward is always the visible sign of the inward, and so it is absolutely important to grasp that inner nature of the Church which St. Paul urges so insistently. The Church is not merely an organization, it is a vital organism, the one body of the mystical Christ.

Evidently then, the Mass is the community drama of the Christ-life. "As often as this memorial-sacrifice is celebrated the work of our redemption is made operative." It is Christ living and working in us to the end of time and it is our life also elevated and transfigured in Him. We do not merely pray to Christ in the Mass; we pray with Him and in Him. Incorporated in Him we not only

share by sanctifying grace in His nature (consortes divinae naturae), but by the three sacraments that imprint character we share in so many degrees in Christ's priesthood. Thus the underlying thought that must always vitalize our participation in the Mass is the thought of our membership in His one mystical body, our solidarity in the Christ-life of sanctifying grace, our participation in the one priesthood of Christ. Hence in the Canon of the Mass it is as "God's holy people" that we offer the Bread of life eternal and the Chalice of unending salvation, a phrase condensing the words of St. Peter: "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation."[1]

The secret of all Christian life is union with Christ, and the Mass is the daily drama of our incorporation in Him. His life was a continuous and entire offering consummated on the cross and crowned with glory in His resurrection. All His life-work was concentrated in those hours when He died and rose again. So for the entire body of the Church and for every member of the mystical Christ, the Mass must be for every one of us in our measure a daily dying and rising with Christ, a sacrifice in which our whole life is concentrated and merged in His.

The Mass therefore is not merely the chief thing in our life—in a very true sense it is everything; and not in our private, individual life only, but in our corporate, social life. How long have we failed to see the social significance of our Catholic liturgy! Of late we hear the rallying cry of Catholic Social Action. How can we fail to see that Catholic Action must center in the Mass, the community drama of the Christ-life? Catholic action is preeminently

[1] I Pet. 2, 9.

the action of the Mass. Indeed one of the ancient names for the Mass was *actio.*

There are certain prayers in the Missal which carry the rubric heading *infra actionem* (within the action). These prayers were originally placed outside the Canon, either before or after it. Later inserted within the Canon, they were marked to be said *infra actionem.* What a lesson here in regard to Catholic Action! Every work of ours, private or public, should be *infra actionem,* encompassed by the eucharistic sacrifice, should derive meaning and purpose and method from the Christ who when He is lifted up draws all things to Himself.

# APPENDIX

## I. St. Justin's Description of the Mass

St. Justin, a Christian apologist of the second century, was martyred probably in Rome about the year 167. In his First Apology (chapters lxv—lxvii) after speaking of Baptism he gives a description of the Mass as it was celebrated in Rome in his day. The passage is very important as being the most complete description of the Mass that has come down to us from the first three centuries. The text as given here is taken from Fortescue: *The Mass*, pp. 17—21 (Longmans).

lxv, 1. "But we, after we have thus cleansed him who believes and is joined to us, lead him to those who are called the brethren, where they are gathered together, in order to say common prayers intently for ourselves, for him who has been enlightened and for all others everywhere; that we, having learned true things, may be worthy to be found good workers in deeds and keepers of the commands, and so may be saved with eternal salvation. 2. When we have finished the prayers we greet each other with a kiss. 3. Then bread and a cup of wine are brought to the president of the brethren and he, taking them, sends up praise and glory to the Father of all through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and makes thanksgiving at length because we are granted these favors by him (the Father). When he has ended the prayers and thanksgiving all the people present cry out, saying Amen. 4. But the word Amen in the Hebrew language means so *be it*. 5. And after the president has given thanks (made the Eucharist) and all the people have cried out, those who

are called by us deacons give to each one present to share the Eucharistic bread and wine and water, and carry them to those not present.

lxvi, 1. And this food is called by us Eucharist, of which no one else may have a share, except he who believes that our teaching is true and has been cleansed by the washing for the forgiveness of sins and regeneration, and so lives as Christ taught. 2. For we do not receive these things as common bread or common drink; but as Jesus Christ our Savior having been made flesh by a word of God had flesh and blood for our salvation, so we have learned that the food, made a Eucharist by a word of prayer that comes from him, from which our blood and flesh are nourished, by change are the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus. 3. For the apostles in the commentaries made by them, which are called the Gospels, have handed down that it was taught to them so: that Jesus having taken bread and having given thanks said: Do this in memory of me: this is my body; and in the same way having taken the cup and having given thanks he said: This is my blood, and gave only to them. 4. The wicked demons, imitating this, have taught that it should be done in the mysteries of Mithra. You know or may learn that bread and a cup of water are placed there with certain hymns in the rites of initiation.

lxvii, 1. But we after this always remind each other of these things; those who can, help the destitute, and we are always united amongst ourselves. 2. And we bless the maker of all things for all we receive, through his son Jesus Christ and through the Holy Ghost. 3. And on the day called of the Sun an assembly in one place is made of

all who live in the towns and in the country; and the commentaries of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time allows. 4. Then, when the reader has stopped, the president makes a warning and an exhortation about the memory of these admirable things in a speech. 5. Then we all stand up together and send up prayers and, as I have said, when we have finished the prayer, bread is brought up and wine and water, and the president sends up prayers and likewise thanksgivings, as far as he has the power, and all the people cry out saying: Amen, and each one receives a distribution and a share of the Eucharist and it is taken to those not present by the deacons. 6. But the wealthy people who wish to do so give what they please, each one as he likes, and what has been collected is handed over to the president and he supports orphans and widows and those who are in difficulties through sickness or any others cause, and prisoners and strangers on their travels; and in general he is the protector of all who are in want. 7. We all make our reunion on the day of the sun, since that is the first day on which God, changing the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Savior on the same day rose from the dead. For they crucified him on the eve of the day of Kronos and on the day after that of Kronos, which is the day of the sun, appearing to his apostles and disciples he taught them these things which I offer to your consideration."

## II. The Canon of the Mass in the Eighth Book of the Apostolic Constitutions

The Apostolic Constitutions is a work in eight books compiled probably in Syria toward the end of the fourth century. In Book II we have an outline of the liturgical service; and in Book VIII we have the oldest extant complete text of the Mass. This work is not an official one; it is by a private compiler who took liberties and who must himself be taken with reserve. Yet by reason especially of its completeness this text is extremely interesting and important. We quote that part of the text which gives the Canon-prayer from the Preface to the Amen. As given here it is taken from Creswell: *The Liturgy of the Eighth Book of the Apostolic Constitutions*, pp. 54-66 (S.P.C.K.). See also Fortescue: *The Mass*, pp. 61-66.

*Then let the high-priest, after praying by himself together with the priests, and putting on a splendid vestment, and standing at the altar, and making the sign of the cross with his hand upon his forehead, say:*

The grace of the Almighty God, and the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.

*And let all with one voice say:* And with thy spirit.

*And the high-priest:* Lift up your minds.

*And all:* We lift them up unto the Lord.

*And the high-priest:* Let us give thanks unto the Lord.

*And all:* It is meet and right.

*And let the high-priest say:*

It is truly meet and right before all things to hymn thee who are indeed the living God, who art before the beginning of created things, of whom the whole family

in heaven and earth is named; who art alone unbegotten, without beginning, paramount, supreme, self-sufficient, the giver of all good, above all cause and origin, ever unchangeable and immutable, from whom as from a source all things came into being. Thou are the knowledge without beginning; the Invisible Light, the Uncreated Hearing; the Untaught Wisdom, the First in thine Essence; Alone in thy Being; and above all number, who broughtest all things out of nothingness into existence by thine Only Begotten Son, whom thou didst before all worlds beget, without intermediary, by wisdom, and might, and goodness, the Only Begotten Son, the Word of God, the Living Wisdom, the First-born of all creation, the Messenger of thy great counsel, the Highpriest, the King and Lord of all rational and sentient nature, who is before all, by whom all things are. For thou, O Eternal God, hast by him made all things, and dost by him bestow upon all an apposite providence: for by whom thou didst graciously give existence, by him also thou gavest to fare well, O God and Father of thine Only Begotten Son, who by him madest first Cherubin and Seraphin, and Aeons, and Hosts, and Virtues, and Powers, and Principalities, and Thrones, and Angels, and Archangels, and after that madest by him all this visible world and all things therein.

Thou didst set up the heaven like an arch, and spread it forth like a covering, and by thy will alone didst found the earth upon nothing. Thou didst fix the firmament, and prepare night and day. Thou broughtest the light out of thy treasures, and by its limitation didst restore the darkness for the repose of the creatures which move in this world. Thou didst appoint the sun to rule the day in

heaven, and the moon to rule the night, and didst inscribe the chorus of the stars for the praise of thy magnificence. Thou madest water for drink, and for ablution; and the vital air, for respiration, and for the transmission of the sound of the voice, by means of the tongue striking the air, and for hearing, which co-operates with the air, so as by reception to perceive the speech lighting upon it. Thou madest fire for a consolation in darkness, and for relief of necessity that we might thereby be warmed and enlightened. Thou didst separate the great sea from the land, and didst render the one navigable, and madest the other passable on foot, making the former multitudinous with small and great beasts, and filling the latter with creatures tame and wild, crowning it also with different plants, garlanding it with herbs, adorning it with flowers, and enriching it with seed. Thou didst constitute the abyss, setting it in a great hollow, the seas of salt waters heaped together, and didst hedge it around with bounds of finest sands; and sometimes with the winds archest its crests to the height of mountains, and sometimes smoothest it as a plain, and sometimes makest it rage with storms, and sometimes stillest it with a calm, so as to make it easily navigable for mariners on ship-board. Thou didst gird with rivers the world created by thee, through Christ, and didst water it with brooks, and irrigate it with perpetual springs; and closely boundest it around with mountains for a most sure immovable foundation of the earth. Thou didst replenish thy world and adorn it with sweet-smelling and medicinal herbs, and with many and different creatures strong and weak, for food and for work, tame and wild. Thou didst variegate it with hissing of

creeping things, with songs of birds, with revolutions of years, with numbers of months and days, with successions of seasons, with courses of rainy clouds, for the production of fruits, for the support of living things, for the regulation of the winds that blow when they are commanded by thee, for the multiplication of plants and herbs. Also thou didst not only create the world, but madest in it man, the citizen of the world, displaying him as an ornament of the world. For thou saidst in thy wisdom, Let us make man in our own image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven. Wherefore also thou hast made him of immortal soul and perishable body, the former out of nothing and the latter of the four elements. Thou hast given him, in his soul, reasonable discernment, discrimination between religion and irreligion, and observation of justice and injustice, and bestowedest upon his body five-fold perception and the power of motion.

Thou, O Almighty God, by Christ didst plant a garden eastwards in Eden, adorned with all plants good for food, and didst introduce man into it, as into a magnificent habitation; and when making him gavest him a law implanted in him, so that he might naturally and of himself possess the principles of the knowledge of God. And when bringing him on to the Paradise of delight thou didst accord unto him power to partake of all, but forbadest the taste of one (tree) alone, holding out the hope of yet better things, so that, if he kept the commandment he should for that receive immortality as a reward. But when he neglected the commandment, and through the deceit of the serpent, and by the counsel of his wife,

tasted the forbidden fruit, thou didst justly drive him out of Paradise, yet, in thy goodness, didst not despise him when he was utterly lost. For he was thy creature. Subjecting the creation to him, thou hast given him to procure himself food by his own sweat and labor, thou thyself planting and increasing and fattening all things (for him). And, causing him to fall asleep for a short time, thou calledst him by an oath to a renewal of being, and loosing the sentence of death didst promise life by the resurrection. Nor was this all; for thou didst pour forth his progeny in an innumerable multitude, and glorifying those who clung to thee, didst punish those who revolted from thee. Thou didst accept the sacrifice of Abel as of one who was holy, and turnedst away the gift of Cain, the murderer of his brother, as of one accursed. Furthermore thou didst accept Seth and Enos, and didst translate Enoch. For thou art the Creator of men, the Dispenser of life, the Provider in want, and the Giver of laws, and the Rewarder of those who keep them, and the Avenger of those who transgress them. Thou didst bring the great flood upon the world on account of the multitude of the ungodly, and, in an ark, didst rescue from the deluge righteous Noe, together with eight souls, the last of those who had gone before, to be the beginning of those who were to come after. Thou didst kindle the fearful fire upon the five cities of the land of Sodom, making a fertile land into a salt lake, for the wickedness of those who dwelt therein, and didst snatch holy Lot from the conflagration. Thou didst rescue Abraham from ancestral impiety, didst appoint him heir of the world, and revealedest thy Christ unto him. Thou didst ordain

Melchisedek high-priest of thy worship. Thou didst show thy patient servant Job victor of the serpent, the beginner of wickedness. Thou madest Isaac a son of promise, and Jacob the father of twelve sons, and pouring forth his progeny in a multitude broughtest them down into Egypt five-and-seventy souls. Thou, O Lord, didst not forget Joseph, but, as a reward of his chastity for thy sake, gavest him to rule over Egypt. Thou, O Lord, didst not forget the Hebrews when they were in bondage under the Egyptians, but on account of thy promise to their fathers didst rescue them and punish the Egyptians. And when men corrupted the natural law, and sometimes esteemed the creation fortuituous, and sometimes honored it above measure, and made it equal unto thee, the God of all, thou sufferedst them not to wander in error, but didst raise up thy servant Moses, and gavest by him a written law to confirm the law of nature. Thou shewedst the creation to be thy work, and expelling the error of polytheism didst glorify Aaron and his posterity with the priesthood. Thou punishedst the Hebrews when they sinned, and receivedst them again when they returned (to thee). Thou didst torment the Egyptians with a tenfold plague. Thou, dividing the sea, didst lead the Israelites through it, and didst chastise the Egyptians, submerging them in the water, when they pursued after them. Thou sweetenedst the bitter water with the wood. Thou pouredst forth water from the precipitous rock. Thou didst shed manna from heaven, and food of quails from the air, and a pillar of fire by night for light, and a pillar of cloud by day, for a shade from the heat. Thou didst raise up Joshua as a general, and by him overthrewest seven na-

tions of the Canaanites. Thou didst divide Jordan. Thou didst dry up the rivers of Etham. Thou without engines or human hands didst cast down walls. Thine be the glory for all, O Master Almighty. The innumerable hosts of Angels, Archangels, Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, Powers, Virtues, Hosts, Aeons, Cherubim, and six-winged Seraphim (who with twain cover their feet, and with twain their heads, and with twain fly), worship thee, saying with thousands of thousands of Archangels, and ten thousands of ten thousands of Angels, crying without interruption of voice, unceasingly:

Holy, Holy, Holy,
Lord of Sabaoth:
Heaven and earth are full of his glory:
Blessed be He for ever.
Amen.

*And let the high-priest thereafter say:*

For Holy indeed art thou, and All-holy, the Highest and most Exalted for ever. And Holy is also thine Only-Begotten Son, our Lord and God Jesus Christ, who in all things, both in manifold creation, and in commensurate providence, ministering unto thee his God and Father, did not overlook the lost race of men, but, after the natural law, after the legal ordinance, after the prophetic warnings, after the tutelage of angels, when men had corrupted both the positive and natural law, and had cast out of their recollection the deluge and the conflagration (of Sodom), and the plagues of the Egyptians, and the slaughters in Palestine, and were on the point of universal destruction, was himself pleased, according to thy will, the Creator to become man, the Lawgiver to become sub-

ject to laws, the High-priest to become a victim, the Shepherd a sheep; and propitiated thee, his God and Father, and reconciled thee to the world, and delivered all men from the impending wrath; being born of a Virgin, and becoming flesh, of the seed of David, and of Abraham, of the tribe of Juda, according to the prophesy spoken beforehand by himself concerning himself, God the Word, the Beloved Son, the First-born of all creation. He, who fashioneth all that are born, was born of a virgin womb, the Fleshless became flesh, and he that was begotten before all worlds was born in time. Living among men holily, and teaching rightfully, driving away every disease and every sickness from men, doing signs and wonders amongst the people, and partaking of food and drink and sleep (being he who nourisheth all who have need of nourishment, and filleth every living thing with satisfaction), he revealed thy Name unto those who knew it not, put ignorance to flight, rekindled godliness, fulfilled thy will, and accomplished the work which thou gavest him to do. All which things being completed, being taken by the hands of sinful priests and high-priests, falsely so-called, and of a law-breaking people, and by the treachery of him who was diseased with iniquity, suffering many things at their hands, and enduring every indignity, according to thy permission, being handed over to Pilate the governor, he, the Judge was judged, the Savior was condemned, the Impassible was nailed to the cross, the essentially Immortal died, and the Life-giver was buried that he might release from suffering and deliver from death those for whom he came, and might break the chains of the devil, and rescue men from his deceit. And on the

third day He rose again from the dead, and after continuing forty days with his disciples was taken up into heaven, and was set at thy right hand, who art his God and his Father.

Wherefore we, having in remembrance the things which he for our sakes endured, give thanks unto thee, O God Almighty, not such as are due but such as we can, and fulfil his injunction. For he in the same night that he was betrayed, took bread in his holy and blameless hands, and looking up to thee, his God and Father, brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: This is the mystery of the new Testament, take of it, eat; this is My Body which is broken for many for the remission of sins. Likewise also he mixed the cup with wine and water, and sanctified it, and gave it to them, saying: Drink ye all of it; this is My Blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins; do this in remembrance of me: for as often as ye eat of this bread and drink of this cup, ye do show forth my death until I come.

Therefore, having in remembrance his passion and death, and resurrection, and his return into heaven, and his future second advent, in which he shall come to judge the quick and the dead, and to give to every man according to his works, we offer unto thee, our King and our God, according to his injunction, this bread and this cup, giving thanks unto thee through him that thou hast counted us worthy to stand before thee and to sacrifice unto thee. And we implore thee to look graciously upon these gifts lying before thee, who art the God who hast no need of aught, and, to be well pleased with them to the honor of thy Christ, and to send down upon this

sacrifice thy Holy Spirit, the witness of the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, that he may declare this bread the Body of thy Christ, and this cup the Blood of thy Christ, that they who partake thereof may be strengthened in godliness, may receive remission of their sins, may be rescued from the devil and his deceit, may be filled with the Holy Ghost, may become worthy of thy Christ, and may obtain eternal life, thou being reconciled unto them, O Master Almighty.

Moreover we pray thee, O Lord, also for thy Holy Church from one end of the world to the other, which thou hast purchased with the precious blood of thy Christ; that thou wouldst keep it unshaken und untroubled unto the consummation of the world; and for every episcopate rightly dividing the word of truth.

Moreover we implore thee for my unworthiness who am now offering unto thee, and for the presbytery, for the deacons and for all the clergy, that thou wouldst instruct them all and fill them with the Holy Ghost.

Moreover we implore thee for the King, and for those in authority, and for all the army, that they may be peaceably disposed towards us, that passing all the time of our life in peace and concord we may glorify thee through Jesus Christ our Hope.

Moreover we offer unto thee also for all who have from the beginning pleased thee, the holy patriarchs, prophets, righteous men, apostles, martyrs, confessors, bishops, presbyters, deacons, subdeacons, readers, singers, virgins, widows, laity, and all whose names thou knowest.

Moreover we offer unto thee for this thy people, that, for the praise of thy Christ, thou wouldest make them a

royal priesthood, a holy nation; for those in virginity and purity; for the widows of the Church; for those in holy matrimony; for women laboring of child; and for the babes of thy people; that thou wouldest cast none of us out.

Moreover we beseech thee for this city, and for those that dwell therein; for the sick; for those who are in bitter slavery; for those in exile; for those in prison; for those who travel by sea or by land; that thou wouldest be a Helper unto all, a Strenthener and Supporter of all.

Moreover we implore thee for those who hate us and persecute us for thy name's sake; for those who are without and are wandering; that thou wouldest turn them unto good, and soften their wrath against us.

Moreover we implore thee for the catechumens of the Church, and for those who are afflicted by the enemy, and for our brethren who are doing penance; that thou wouldest perfect the first in the faith, and wouldest purify the second from the influence of the evil one, and wouldest receive the repentance of the last, and forgive both them and us our transgressions.

Moreover we offer unto thee for seasonable weather, and for the copious produce of the fruits; that receiving abundantly of thy good things we may ceaselessly praise thee, who givest food to all flesh.

Moreover we implore thee for those who are for reasonable cause absent; that thou wouldest preserve us all in godliness, and gather us together, steadfast, blameless, and without reproach in the kingdom of thy Christ, the God of every sentient and intelligent creature, our King.

For unto thee is (due) all glory, worship and thanksgiving, honor and adoration, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, both now, and ever and unto all perpetual and endless ages of ages.

*And let all the people say:* Amen.

## III. The Canon of the Mass in the Roman Rite

The translation is that of Rev. Richard E. Power published in *Orate Fratres*, Vol. I, No. 9, p. 257.

The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.
Lift up your hearts.
We have them lifted up to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is fitting and proper.

It is fitting indeed and proper, right and helpful unto salvation, always and everywhere to give thanks to Thee, holy Lord, Father almighty, eternal God, through Christ our Lord; through whom the Angels praise Thy majesty, the Dominions adore, the Powers are in awe, the Virtues of highest heaven and the blessed Seraphim unite in blissful exultation. With them, we pray Thee, grant that our voices too may blend, saying in adoring praise:

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty! Heaven and earth are filled with Thy glory. Hail to Thee in the highest! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hail to Him in the highest!

And now, most gracious Father, we humbly beg of Thee and entreat Thee, through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, to deem acceptable and bless these gifts of Thine, now set apart for the holy and all-perfect sacrifice; which we offer unto Thee especially for Thy holy Catholic Church; that Thou wouldst deign to keep it in peace and unity, to protect and sustain it throughout the world; together with Thy servant *(name)* our Pope, and *(name)* our Bishop, and all the bishops and their flocks, who cherish the Catholic and apostolic faith.

Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants . . ., and of all here present, whose faith is known to Thee and likewise their devotion, on whose behalf we offer unto Thee, and who themselves offer unto Thee, this sacrifice of praise for themselves and all who are theirs, for the good of their souls, according to their hope of salvation and deliverance from all harm, and who pay Thee the homage which they owe Thee, God, living and true.

United in Thy holy Church, we honor the memory, first of the glorious and immaculate Virgin Mary, mother of our Lord and God, Jesus Christ; then that of Thy blessed apostles and martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon and Thaddeus; Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus, Cornelius, Cyprian, Lawrence, Chrysogonus, John and Paul, Cosmas and Damian, and of all Thy Saints, by whose merits and prayers grant that we may be always

favored with the help of Thy protection, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

We further beseech Thee, O Lord, to receive in atonement this sacrifice of adoration from us and from all Thy household. Provide that our days be spent in Thy peace, save us from everlasting damnation, and cause us to be numbered among those whom Thou hast chosen, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Do Thou, O God, deign to bless what we offer, and make is approved, effective, worthy and pleasing in every way, that it may become for our good the Body and Blood of Thy dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Who, the day before He suffered, took bread into His holy and venerable hands, and having raised His eyes to heaven unto Thee, His almighty Father, giving thanks to Thee, blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take ye all, and eat of this: FOR THIS IS MY BODY.

In like manner, when the supper was done, taking also this goodly chalice into His holy and venerable hands, again giving thanks to Thee, He blessed it and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take ye all, and drink of this: FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL TESTAMENT: THE MYSTERY OF FAITH, WHICH SHALL BE SHED FOR YOU AND FOR MANY UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS. As often as you shall do these things, in memory of Me shall you do them.

Wherefore, O Lord, we Thy servants, and likewise Thy holy people, calling to mind not only the blessed passion of the same Christ Thy Son, but also His resurrection from the dead, and finally His glorious ascension

into heaven, offer unto Thy supreme majesty, of Thy gifts bestowed upon us, the pure, the holy, the all-perfect sacrifice of thanks for our redemption—the holy Bread of life eternal and the Chalice of unending salvation.

Which do Thou deign to regard with gracious and kindly attention and hold acceptable, as Thou didst deign to esteem the offerings of Thy holy servant Abel, and the sacrifice of Abraham our patriarch, and that which Thy chief priest Melchisedech offered unto Thee, a holy sacrifice of thanks, in full accordance with Thy will.

Most humbly we implore Thee, almighty God, cause these our mystic offerings to be brought by the hands of Thy holy Angel unto Thy altar above, before the face of Thy divine majesty; that those of us who, from this sharing in the heavenly sacrifice, shall receive the most sacred Body and Blood of Thy Son, may be filled with every grace and heavenly blessing, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Be mindful, O Lord, also of Thy servants who have gone before us with the sign of faith, and rest in peace. To these, O Lord, and to all who sleep in Christ, we beseech Thee to grant, of Thy goodness, a state of comfort, light and peace, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

To us also, sinners, yet Thy servants, trusting in the greatness of Thy mercy, deign to grant some share of heavenly bliss in union with Thy holy apostles and martyrs; with John, Stephen, Matthias, Barnabas, Ignatius, Alexander, Marcellinus, Peter, Felicitas, Perpetua, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia, and all Thy Saints; into whose company we implore Thee to admit us, not weigh-

ing our merits, but freely granting us pardon, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Through whom, O Lord, Thou dost ever provide, make holy, fill with life, make fruitful of good, and bestow upon all these Thy gifts.

Through Him, and with Him, and in Him, is to Thee, God the Father almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honor and glory, forever and ever.

Amen.

## IV. A Eucharistic Window

An effort to work out in a pictorial way the analysis of the Canon of the Mass presented in a foregoing chapter (p. 32) is shown in our frontispiece which is a photograph of a memorial window[1] in the Church of St. Joseph, Red Wing, Minnesota. The holy Eucharist has usually been represented in modern art by the monstrance, that is, in terms of eucharistic adoration. The liturgical movement of today reminds us that the primary aspect of the Eucharist is not that of the abiding Presence regarded as the ob-

[1] By Weston & Leighton of Minneapolis.

ject of our adoration, but rather that of the Eucharist as our sacrificial offering and sacrificial food. This window has been designed in the thought and mood of the ancient devotion, and therefore represents the Eucharist in the aspect of the holy sacrifice and especially in terms of what is the very heart of the Mass, the great Canon-prayer.

The main structural feature of the composition is suggested by the words of Christ: "I am the vine; you are the branches." The mystery of human redemption is the mystery of our incorporation in Christ. The Mass is the community drama of the sacrifice of redemption in which we are made one in Christ. The vine therefore represents the body of the faithful, the Church, the mystical Christ.

The proportions of the window are such as to allow the representation in its lower section of the introductory portion of the Mass, the ancient Mass of the Catechumens. This is a service of psalmody and scriptural reading. In the center is the figure of David who represents psalmody. To either side are St. Paul and the prophet Isaias. Together they represent the Epistle readings, taken from the Old and New Testaments. At the four corners are the symbols of the four evangelists, SS. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, representing the Gospel readings.

The main portion of the window shows the Canon of the Mass represented by lettering and symbols arranged in concentric circles elongated to conform to the space.

The central idea here is that expressed in the words of Christ: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to Myself." The cross, as the emblem of the sacrificial death of the Lord, is the sign of His entire

work of human redemption. To the Crucified all things are drawn in the hope of salvation and in praise and thanksgiving. From Him the graces of redemption radiate to all the world.

The figure of the Crucified is shown in the manner of ancient Christian art, that is, not in suffering but in glory. For He died and rose again. The cross is an emblem not of failure but of triumph. The Christ of the Mass is not the dead Christ but the risen Christ who sitteth at the right hand of God. Hence He is shown here in royal and priestly vesture and in an attitude which tells that He is the mediator of all things in heaven and on earth.

Around this central figure of Christ in glory, and amid the branches of the vine which represents the mystic Christ, the various elements of the great Canon-prayer are arranged in lettering and symbol, and with a symmetry furnished by the Canon-prayer itself.

Our first circle, immediately about the figure of the Lord, is made up of the three central elements of the Canon-prayer: 1) the *Qui pridie*, containing the words of consecration spoken over the bread, and illustrated here by the symbol of bread; 2) the *Simili modo*, containing the words spoken over the wine, and illustrated by the symbol of the chalice; 3) the *Unde et memores*, in which we say explicitly that the eucharistic Christ, made present by the words of consecration, is our sacrificial offering in the Mass. This third element is illustrated by symbols telling of the passion and the resurrection of the Lord who died for our sins and rose again for our justification. On the one hand we have the emblems of the passion and the sun hidden in clouds, and on the other the eagle and the

sun in full splendor. (Psalm 102: "Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's.")

In the next circle we have a group of four prayers, balanced in pairs. The first pair, *Hanc igitur* (before the Consecration) and *Supra quae* (after the Consecration), are prayers of oblation. Hence they are illustrated by the incense symbol. The second pair, *Quam oblationem* (before the Consecration) and *Supplices Te* (after the Consecration), are prayers of invocation. In the opinions of liturgists both have been regarded as possibly the equivalent in the Roman rite of the epiclesis in the Oriental rites. Their symbol therefore is the dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit.

The third circle is made up of six mementos, three before and three after the Consecration. The symbols in these cases have been derived from the analysis of the Canon in an article by Dr. Pius Parsch in the Austrian liturgical review, *Bibel und Liturgie.*

The first memento *(Te igitur)* is a prayer for the Church, meaning especially the hierarchy and clergy and making special mention of the names of Pope and Bishop. This prayer is illustrated by the mitre and keys, emblems of spiritual authority.

The second memento *(Memento)* is a prayer for the whole body of the faithful with special reference to those whose names we may wish to insert, our relatives and friends, and those who are actually present at the Mass. The symbol here is the olive branch. (Psalm 127: "Thy children as olive plants round about thy table.")

The third memento *(Communicantes)* is a prayer in honor of the saints. The symbol shows a lily, an em-

blem of Mary, the queen of saints, and two palm branches and two stars, emblems of the whole heavenly company.

The fourth memento *(Memento)* is a prayer for the faithful departed. Its symbol is a dove carrying an olive twig, a subject taken from the story of Noah and often shown in the Roman catacombs. The souls of the faithful departed, sanctified through the sacrifice of redemption, are represented by the dove flying heavenward with the emblem of peace and reconciliation.

The fifth memento *(Nobis quoque)* is a prayer for ourselves who "though sinners, yet hope for some share of heavenly bliss in union with the saints." The symbol is an anchor, an emblem of hope, shown here as partly submerged, as we are still upon the sea of life, and the stars which represent the saints above.

The sixth memento *(Per quem haec)* is a prayer for blessing upon all nature, upon all things which God has given for our use. The symbol chosen shows bread and wine which stand for all the fruits of the earth, these two being given not only for our natural use but also as the elements which in the Mass become our spiritual food and drink.

Finally, the outer circle of the Canon prayer is made up of the Preface at its beginning and the Doxology at its end, which envelop the whole of it in an atmosphere of praise and thanksgiving. The Preface and Doxology are shown in lettering which runs throughout the border of the composition, beginning with the *Sursum corda* and ending with the *Amen*. The praise and thanksgiving motives are also expressed by the symbols of the Father and

the Holy Spirit which are introduced at the summit of the window above the figure of Christ.

Although the theme of the window is chiefly the Canon-prayer, the Communion part of the Mass is clearly expressed in the symbols of the *Qui pridie* and the *Simili modo*, the paten with the bread and the chalice, beneath the outstretched arms of Christ, and in the double occurrence of the word *Pax* above. Peace is the dominant thought of the Communion part of the Mass, peace as meaning the sum total of all the blessings of the Incarnation and Redemption.

Thus the representation of the holy Trinity in conjunction with the message of peace expresses the great double motive of the entire liturgy, made operative chiefly in the sacrifice of the Mass: Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to men of good will.

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